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THE ANIMAL KINGDOM

BY IVAN SANDERSON

[IVAN SANDERSON is now in his twenty-seventh year. In 1928 he was a member of an expedition to the Dutch Indies, collecting specimens for the British Museum. In 1932 he set forth on a second invasion of the Animal Kingdom, this time as leader of the Percy Sladen Expedition to British Cameroons, West Africa. There, for the better part of two years, he collected the zoölogical specimens and encountered the beasts which he has described in the following pages. — THE EDITORS]

I

THE animals that crowd their little faces into these pages lived, or are still living, in the deep virgin forests of West Africa, around a place called Mamfe, some 250 miles north-northeast of Calabar at the extreme southeast corner of the Protectorate of Nigeria.

Running north from Calabar is a river known as the Cross River — a logical name for a river that one has to cross continually because of sand bars. This river suddenly turns right, out

of Nigeria, into the adjacent country mandated to Great Britain. All the country to the west or left of this river is intersected by roads and railways; to the east is untouched, unspoiled Africa, as it was before Europeans began crawling about it.

It was into such country that I went with two colleagues, George Russell and Philip Seaton, and a varying complement of Africans collected en route as necessity dictated — but perhaps before I go further I had better explain why I went to Mamfe at all.

Ever since I was a child, and had a nurse who showed me animals, chased butterflies in the sunlight with me, and taught me to blare out the names of strange animals from a book full of pictures of palm trees, I had wanted to go and look for animals in a land where there was sunshine. Then one day I found myself in the position of being able to choose between staying a year at school before going to a university, to learn more about my beloved animals, or doing something else. I chose the something else, and bolted from Europe like a shot rabbit at the

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tender, impressionable, and exciting age of seventeen, my boxes filled with traps, butterfly nets, skinning implements, and all the other recognized stock-in-trade of the collector.

Then came the first shock to my youthful enthusiasm. I worked by night and by day setting traps, stalking animals, skinning animals, stuffing animals; and when all the animals so painstakingly accumulated had been looked at in the cold light of a museum, what did my work amount to? Just nothing more than a repetition of some of the looser moments of that great naturalist Alfred Russel Wallace! There was obviously something wrong.

Slowly it dawned on me. Scientific methods of collecting animals were out of date.

The truth seemed to be this. Nobody knew anything about the *how* and *why* of animals' behavior other than studying those few kept in institutions. Only the bold differences that can be observed through a comparison of dried and pickled remains in museums seemed to have been recorded. I decided that I would study animals by laboratory methods but in their natural surroundings and in the jungle — if somebody might be persuaded that my idea was practical, necessary, and comparatively inexpensive.

The start of organizing an expedition is somewhat bewildering. I soon saw that business methods would have to be employed if my ideal was to be realized — a real portable research station to be taken into the heart of the African jungle. The question of capital had to be tackled first.

By chance a circular fell into my hands stating that a certain famous scientist required internal organs of some particular animals. Funnily enough, these animals were only to be found in the one place that I had had in the back of my mind as a promising spot for operations.

Then, again by chance, I heard of another man who wanted definite evidence of a whale in the rivers of the same country. From him I went to the leading scientists at Cambridge — and found that they required the exotic Giant Water Shrew from the same place, and also a general collection of the animals inhabiting the country. The British Museum also wanted specimens of the queer, tick-like *Podogona*. All these people, moreover, offered to assist me in getting backing from scientific societies.

My major problems of what to collect and where to get the necessary money solved, the next question arose — whom to take with me? For the tropics and hard work I believe one must weed out all the athletes, sportsmen, and anybody who is large, beefy, or 'tough.' From the remaining 'worms' you should choose someone who is at least at home in and used to smoky bars, airless cabarets, and crowded tube trains — and hope that he will not carry with him any illness which will flower in the tropics.

My friend George Russell fulfilled all the conditions, and, strangely enough, on the quiet happened to be a better athlete than many of the beefy gentlemen — and a better sportsman I could not have selected.

When George got persistent low fever and was told he was dying of consumption I rushed him down to the coast, meanwhile wiring frantically for someone to take his place. George, having found that his lungs were as sound as any man's, waited at the coast for this substitute and brought him up to me. Philip Seaton, whom we named the Duke for abstruse reasons of our own, was an ideal person for an expedition. He was slightly 'beefy' at first, but after one or two spates of fever he got thin like us, and was positively bouncing by the end of the trip.

II

From our little house at Mamfe the view was conventional enough, provided one looked west, southwest, or south: fields of grass, a little stream, a tennis court, some small sheds with corrugated-iron roofs, and a second-class metal road winding between them all. Even the trees seemed familiar. A horse grazed quietly, it drizzled from a gray sky, and a white man wearing gray flannel trousers and smoking a pipe passed along the road on a bicycle.

All of a sudden incongruity in the form of a dazzlingly white bird, with awkward black legs and a long beak, fell rather than flew into sight and attempted to land on the horse. Needless to say, it missed its objective, as egrets always do. Hurling against a fence, it closed its wings before finding its feet and remained wobbling drunkenly back and forth, giving vent to shrill cries and staring wildly about, as if this were not its own fault.

These birds are vermin, — or rather, Africa is verminous with them, — for nothing so beautiful or artistically satisfying as an egret could ever really be classed with rats and the body louse. Previously they were much sought after for their plumes, which stick out from under the wings like a tiny snow cloud. Now that better and cheaper plumes can be made out of cellophane, this lovely bird is spared to play the part of the London pigeon around the houses of West African settlements.

On this particular morning, when the whole world as viewed from the Mamfe rest house seemed gray and dark green, the egrets stood out like lights in their dazzling whiteness. On one side of the house a long string was stretched between two poles. Along this at intervals little butter-muslin bags were tied, containing the skulls of animals that had been skinned. The skull is almost the most precious part of an animal

from a zoölogist's point of view, and receives special attention. It is cleaned of as much flesh as possible, soaked in running water, rolled in sawdust, and finally hung out to dry in a little bag to which a label is attached. The bag is to prevent the loss of teeth that may become loosened through drying or decomposition of the flesh.

The flies, however, soon found out what was in the little bags and proceeded to lay their eggs in them. The egrets found the flies, and the string became a sort of second *Chambre des Députés*. The Diehards flapped their wings and wobbled precariously, the *Front Populaire* buzzed incessantly, multiplying among the offal almost while one watched. Egrets are presumably waders, if judged by their legs and feet, which are long and slender. The process of chasing fly grubs suspended about three inches below a swaying string becomes for them, therefore, about as great a problem as eating an apple tied below a rope would be to a rather inexperienced tightrope walker. Each bird fell off once every few minutes; sometimes all would topple over together in a cloud of flies.

The string of little bags was removed at sundown and taken indoors as a precaution against the undue attentions of the many nocturnal marauders. One egret, a rather weedy-looking bird, discovered where they went to, a small shed at the back of the house. Unhappily, he got wedged between the wall and the eaves of the roof in trying to gain an entrance, though how he got so far I could never make out. Here he remained, squawking like a child, while we searched for the focus of the commotion. I found him not particularly frightened but obviously rather angry, like Walt Disney's duck, his eyes filled with that expression of surprised wonderment that an egret always assumes when committing its daily folly or error in judgment. As I grappled with his

feathery posterior in an endeavor to squeeze it through the eaves, he gave a hiccough, opened his beak, and let fall three balls of fly maggots each as large as an apple. The egret looked more surprised than ever and slipped through the eaves without further difficulty.

The egrets of Mamfe had enemies, one of whom met his end suddenly on this particular gloomy day. The seedy-looking egret, after his miscalculation at the back of the house, had assumed an impertinent attitude toward his kith and kin. Scorning the swaying skull string, he took to intruding upon our privacy at the skinning tables and had to be constantly ordered off the field for roughhousing with the skinners. On this occasion he was shooed off the verandah at the moment when his brethren were beating a hasty retreat to the safety of the bushes behind the kitchen.

Swaying and chattering with anger, he stood amongst the stuffed animals pinned on boards that had been carried out to dry in the sun, which had just made its first appearance in several weeks. So taken up was he with his indignation that he failed to notice the hurried departure of the other birds or the silent cruciform shadow that glided mysteriously over the hard-beaten earth around him. Gong-Gong, the youngest member of the staff, who was posted at the corner of the verandah throughout the day to watch for the hawks and kites which swooped out of the sky to snatch up our stuffed rats, thinking them to be alive, gave the warning.

The hawk, a particularly big one, which would probably be called an eagle in this country, was, however, after our little friend the egret. Gong-Gong's call to arms was the signal for a wild scramble for loaded shotguns, always kept to hand. We dashed for the open only to see the shadow of the marauder flash across the ground as the

great bird nose-dived for his prey. The little egret, suddenly realizing his peril, struggled to gain the air.

With a deafening report two barrels gave tongue at the very instant the hawk was stalling to bring his talons into position for the death grip. With a burst of feathers, the interloper swerved, somersaulted, and crashed with wings outspread. The excited staff dashed eagerly in to the kill, but the fierce bird was by no means done for. Hissing, yellow eyes blazing, he hurled himself at the men's legs. He was quickly dispatched with a shot from an automatic.

In the excitement of victory the egret was forgotten. He had escaped and apparently benefited from his experience, for he never returned again, though we saw him later on the sandbanks in the river with his drooping left wing and incredulous expression.

III

'Master, man bring beef.'

There was always excitement at that announcement, which was made to me at all times of the day and night as I sat before the catalogues measuring rats' feet and frogs' tummies, pickling lice and worms, and doing the other multitudinous odd jobs that a scientific collecting trip entails.

A grinning black face appeared above the verandah level with my feet.

'Well, what is it?' I inquired.

'Beef,' replied the face. 'Master go take 'em two shilling,' and he fumbled in his cloth.

With a scream he withdrew his hand and started sucking his finger, cursing loudly and roundly in By'angi. Willing helpers came forward, searched him, and produced two minute black clots of glossy fur each about two inches long. These were placed on the verandah, where they instantly rose on their hind legs like pugilists and, screaming in

almost inaudibly high-pitched voices, proceeded to wrestle and box with each other. I say wrestle and box, but there certainly were n't any rules.

Of all the mean, unpleasant, evil-smelling, vicious things that live, the West African shrew (*Crocidura*) is the most mean, unsavory, and irascible. These screeching little horrors were bought for a penny each, placed in a tiny cage, and supplied with a haunch of strong-smelling anteater meat. They fought and screamed for the rest of the day and most of the night. Next morning all the meat, larger than both of them put together, had vanished, and only one shrew remained alive. The other lay in a corner of the cage, eviscerated and with most of its head eaten by its companion.

These shrews will attack anything, man and large bush cats included. Their tiny jaws are armed with a phalanx of needle-sharp teeth, and their pungent smell protects them from predatory birds and mammals alike. They are classed as insectivores, but their diet is more omnivorous than that of man himself. I have seen them eat each other, insects, shellfish, corn, putrified flesh, and even a dead snake. They inhabit the long grass of forest clearings, where they are often caught, as in the case of these two, when natives are clearing the ground.

As the day wore on, our friend who had been bitten returned several times with more shrews, as well as a variety of other local vermin, until the whole house began to stink. This smell is unbelievable until it is encountered. In the British Museum I have merely touched a large bottle of alcohol in which some shrews had been sealed for over three years and had to wash my hands twice to prevent being sick. Nothing drowns the smell; it gets everywhere. Yet by a simple process the natives transmute it into the most delicious, delicate, and lasting scent I

have ever encountered, smelling somewhere between sandalwood and tangerines. The shrews are stewed whole with certain leaves and palm oil to bind the brew. The oil rises to the surface and is skimmed off, carrying with it the wonderful aroma that is so unlike the beastly little animal.

IV

During our expedition we collected some 7000 odd animals comprising about 450 species. This is only an approximation, as several of the groups have not yet been completely identified and named. There proved to be 70 species of mammals; 64 different reptiles, including snakes; 46 different frogs, and about 250 different spiders, centipedes, parasitic worms, ticks, crabs, lobsters, shells, scorpions, and others. Only a handful of the whole lot are sufficiently well known to have popular names, and quite a number, being entirely new even to science, are only now receiving 'Latin' names. The result is that I have no choice but to label the creatures to whom I introduce you by their fabulous scientific names.

This may, however, serve a double purpose. First, it may answer a question that is constantly asked: why do scientists persist in allotting such stupendous titles to such obscure animals? Secondly, it may act as a kind of insurance for the mere facts that I have perforce to include in my tales.

Facts about lions and rhinoceroses are open to verification or speculation, as the case may be, whereas facts about a frog with hairs are open to neither, unless some peg is provided upon which that frog may be securely hung. The scientific name does this, as it gives a guide to the purely zoological and gruesomely intricate literature upon the subject.

The absolute necessity of giving

animals their true and complete names is evident when the wild life of the world and not merely of these insignificant little islands is being dealt with. There are over six thousand different beetles in the British Isles alone; when investigating a place like the Cameroons, the infinite varieties are legion. In England we have but four frogs; in Mamfe there are at least fifty different kinds. Try to think of fifty different names for frogs without becoming idiotic or grammatically absurd!

To turn to *Rana occipitalis*, this frog's name means literally 'the back-of-the-head one who makes noises.' The word *rana* was used by the Romans for 'frog,' but it comes from the more ancient Sanskrit or Aryan stem *ru* or *rau*, meaning 'one who makes a sound'; hence the inference. The *occipitalis* signifies the great width of the head, which really is prodigious, so the Latin name is not altogether absurd.

These frogs are very numerous in all cleared spaces of the jungle. They are aquatic, spending most of their time floating at the surface of the water with their protuberant eyes sticking out like periscopes. They grow to a length of about six inches and are very voracious, swallowing insects, spiders, crabs, smaller frogs, and most else that comes their way. Without them and their allies which inhabit the same waters, man would be in an even more sorry plight than he is at present in these lugubrious climes. They demolish countless myriads of mosquito larvæ per year, and without them these carriers of the mortal yellow fever and malaria would become so numerous that man would be driven from the country altogether.

Rana occipitalis is impeccably spotted below with black on his otherwise pure white belly. He was a sore subject to our native staff of skimmers and trappers. Several large specimens were brought to us alive and placed in a

large bowl with a lid weighted with stones. Needless to say, they all jumped in unison and made their escape while we were occupied elsewhere. They scattered far and wide before we discovered our loss. Some 'made for bush,' as the West African term is for going home to the vegetation; others behaved in a peculiar and decidedly questionable manner. They apparently found their way into the bedroom (or rather the space where we slept) and concealed themselves in a certain unmentionable article of bedroom furniture. I forthwith retired to rest with an attack of malaria.

As I lay under my mosquito net shivering and aching with the fever, strange metallic sounds were wafted up to me. I could not imagine where they were coming from or what they were. Time passed and the light began to fail. All of a sudden I forgot my fever as a raucous singsong clamor broke out beneath my ear. 'Car-r-r-ach, car-r-r-ach,' it went, reverberating through the room, and the stanchions of the mosquito net quivered in unison. I leapt out of bed convinced that my temperature had risen to the point of delirium. The noise ceased abruptly. I yelled for the household staff (No, I won't call them 'boys'!) and hurrying feet came out of the rapidly descending dusk.

'Am I talking gibberish,' I inquired, 'or is there a peculiar whirring noise going on in here?'

Gong-Gong listened intently, but his face belied his concern for my mental condition. He did n't hear anything, he assured me; I began to retire below the mosquito net. No sooner had I done so than it burst out afresh. Gong-Gong dived under the bed.

'Master, the beef!' he shouted, pushing out an article of enameled furniture, from which sprang half a dozen eager amphibians.

The whole household turned out and a great pursuit began. All the frogs

were eventually collared and drowned in the all-absorbing alcohol. I burst into a profuse sweat more from laughter than surprise, and another attack of malaria was satisfactorily overcome.

V

Such vermin as I have mentioned are common features of the inhabited parts of the land, but there are others more numerous and more essentially 'verminous.' The common toad (*Bufo regularis*) is the only source of food of the deadly night adder. This frog — for all toads are frogs, just as all gnats are mosquitoes and all dromedaries are camels, despite what your nurse or your schoolmaster may have told you when young — is an interesting animal notwithstanding its commonness and reputation. Toads are not evil, are quite harmless to handle, and, in fact, make intelligent though rather unconventional pets. *Bufo regularis* is not unlike our common toad, but its behavior is very different in many respects.

When we arrived in Africa in September, the mystic, though often rainy, nights were filled with strange noises. Predominant among these was a terrific, colossal, stupendous — and any other word the American film writer can think of — babel, created by our friend *Bufo regularis*. I eventually tracked down the nearest colony to a wellhead by the house which was crowded with individuals gathered together to mate and to 'sing' — which functions appear to be intimately linked in amphibian ethics.

The males were small and yellow, the females large and dark brown. Only the former 'sing,' but the power of their lungs, or rather of the special pouches in their throats, compensates for their mates' inabilities. Colonies of toads are dotted about the countryside within hearing of each other. For a time all is silence, and only the whirring of the

myriad nocturnal insects can be heard, a noise that is itself akin to silence by reason of its incessant stridence. All of a sudden one toad, acting as a sort of precentor, will begin, 'Quir-rrr-rrr-whirr, quir-rrr-rrr-whirr,' into which the others of his colony join in perfect rhythm. Other colonies take it up until the whole countryside is deafened with the racket, which is as precise as a machine. All at once it ceases, as if every toad had been struck dead at the same instant by an electric current. Occasionally one choir far off will fail to stop and will carry on for a few seconds like an echo. The effect is very remarkable, and remains as unexpected as it is irritating throughout the night.

This behavior, concerned as it is with mating, was in full swing when we arrived in Africa. As the weeks passed, however, the rains ceased and the toads got done with their spawning. They then left their damp abodes and scattered over the drier country. They also quit their strident community singing and adopted a sort of 'cluck-quack' which they uttered incessantly but at irregular intervals throughout the night, and individually.

Still later in the year, when we were in the big river living on a sort of glorified punt, these busy little beasts were congregating on the sand banks, apparently waiting for the rains to come down and swell the rivers, making them thirty feet deeper and enabling the toads to gauge the safe limits of their spawning grounds. They seem to know that if the eggs are laid too close to the swiftly running stream they will be washed away and perish.

On one particular night we tied up alongside a narrow sand bar at the bottom of a deep gully clothed in virgin forest. When the paddlers had put away their gear and gone off to a near-by village, night descended on us, engulfing us in that world of ephemeral loveliness only known in the deep trop-

ics, where the whole air is filled with lascivious smells and sounds. Gradually a roaring rose above the gentle swirl of the oily waters. Louder it grew, and still louder, like a gigantic turbine, though muffled and apparently coming from all directions at once. We shone the torch on to the sand bar, for it was now quite dark, and myriad pairs of little rubies leapt into being. There, crowded in thousands together, we saw the little toads all squatting with their eager little faces directed upstream. There must have been hundreds of thousands of them stretching as far as the eye could see, all pale fawn color, all with their little throats pumping in and out like tiny bellows as they called incessantly for the rains to fall and wash them up over the banks into the flooded forests beyond. We stepped out among them, and although scores leapt into the dark waters, thousands remained hopping around our feet, blinking their ruby-red eyes in the torchlight.

Here were the same toads we had seen yellow and black in Calabar, deep reddish brown on the grassy slopes of Mamfe station, mottled brown at other places, and now all light fawn in color. Protracted research eventually elucidated the puzzle, and here is the answer. The color of toads' skins is produced by minute granules of color known as chromatophores. These congregate in tubular cells situated in the deeper layers of the skin. When the toads are in the water to breed, their skins are moist and transparent and the colors show through. Not only this: the changes of color produced by alteration of heat and light or by anger or fright, as in ourselves when we blush, may also be seen, and frogs have an ability in this respect far surpassing even the chameleon. Later, when they leave the water, the outer layers of their skin dry up and become opaque, and their colors duller and more static.

By the end of the year the skin is hardened and dead, so that practically all color except that of contained dust particles is gone, making them appear dusty and grayish brown like a dirty white handkerchief.

VI

No record of the 'vermin' of Mamfe should exclude man's greatest little tropical friend the gecko, though it is an outrage to place his name even at the foot of the list. This little lizard, universal to hot countries in his manifold forms, appears mysteriously in any house as soon as it is inhabited. Running about the walls or stalking insects across the ceiling in his world that is upside down or tilted to an angle of ninety degrees or more, and uttering his shrill little chatters, this animal has been a friend indeed and in need to many a lonely man far away in the wilds. Night after night the little geckos will appear as the lights are lit, until each one becomes familiar, this with his recently broken tail, that with his all but new tail.

Geckos have been known to get so tame that they would come on to the table every night at dinnertime for tit-bits. After months', even years' absence, the resident in the tropics may return to his former quarters and on the second or third night there will be the little gecko standing eagerly by his plate, his great lustrous black eyes keenly watching, his precarious tail wagging like a tiny dog's.

We had one such that lived in the drawer where we kept our skinning implements. Every morning he was disturbed when we got out our tools, but he persisted even after he lost his tail through getting entangled with a pair of compasses. He just shed his tail from the roots as if it were a useless umbrella and left it wriggling and squirming like another animal in the

drawer. He soon grew another, but his affliction did n't deter him from his nightly labors as self-appointed watchdog to us. Prowling about the ceiling, he would wait for some insect to settle, attracted by the lamplight. Then, whatever its size, — and there were many as large as himself, — he would stalk it just as a cat a mouse. Nearer he came, and nearer, until, forgetting his feline tactics, he would rush in like a terrier. Sometimes he missed; sometimes the beetle, moth, or praying mantis would fly off just as he was preparing to pounce; but if he caught it a great to-do commenced. The powerful insects fought to get free, but the little gecko worried and shook them until one would have thought the sucker-like pads on his feet must lose their grip on the ceiling to which they clung, in opposition to all the laws of gravity.

Only once did he fall, and that time he did it properly. He had seized a praying mantis a little over three inches long, and a strenuous fight ensued. So great was the noise that we put down our pens to watch. The mantis is a truly terrifying creature, apparently always willing to engage in a battle even with man. If one alights on the table before you it will stand up on four legs, turn its beastly head on its narrow neck, and stare you straight in the face with its evil protuberant eyes, at the same time presenting its two forearms crooked like a pugilist's and bristling with rows of slender toothlike spines, with which it not only seizes its prey but also its mate, from both of which it sucks the lifeblood. In fact the love life of the mantis consists of this gruesome performance alone, for without it the male is unable to impregnate the female. Only in its writhing death agonies can it conclude the act of copulation, a thought that might well be pondered by some of our modern sociologists.

Such was the antagonist our little

friend had assaulted. The struggle was protracted and the mantis was strong. Suddenly the combatants fell with a crash, squarely into my cup of tea, sending it showering all over me and my work. The gecko was none the worse, but somewhat dazed and utterly amazed. Had I not fished him out, he would have assuredly drowned. I placed him under the lamp to dry off, which he did at his leisure while I dispatched the mantis, for I dislike these vampires.

When the gecko had recovered himself, I proffered the still writhing torso of the insect, but he would have none of it. He allowed me to handle him without attempting to bite, a thing he had never done before; perhaps he knew I was a willing accomplice. Presently he trotted away to regain his exalted topsy-turvy world.

The body of the mantis remained on the table in two completely separate parts. Next morning at eleven-thirty it was still wriggling. I wonder if it was a male?

VII

We camped near the road because, while it lasted, it served as a useful method of getting about the otherwise almost impenetrable forest, and also because it was useful to know whether it was cloudy or fine and whether the wind was blowing or not, which was only discernible through this narrow cleft in the roof of the forest.

Along it we wandered with shotguns and field glasses, in the heat of the evening — at least so we judged by our watches, for the degree of light was always somewhat crepuscular.

I was thus lazily employed on the third day after our arrival in the forest, when all our gear had been stored in a shipshape manner and mysterious little bush-stick and green-leaf houses had finished sprouting up around the domains occupied by the communal cook-

ing fire. I carried my shotgun gingerly while I navigated myself from root to root and boulder to boulder, my mind filled with reminiscences of cleaning four hundred traps, and forebodings of the imminent collapse of the tent, which appeared to be only a matter of time.

All at once I was arrested by a sound that I could have sworn was an organized revolt on the part of my own stomach against the unnamed muddle that had been forced into it at lunch-time. A little confused, with that unreasoning but inbred bashfulness born of civilized ethics, I paused, prepared for the indignity to repeat itself. Sure enough, it did, but from somewhere among the foliage to the left of the path.

Such a phenomenon, when encountered for the first time, is arresting to say the least; yet it very soon became the second time, then the third, then the fourth, until I began to feel quite used to it. I have dined with a most illustrious Chinese family, also with the inmates of a Balinese seminary, who both showed their appreciation of the ample fare provided for them, with great gusto, in this unmistakable though to the European mind somewhat unconventional and rude manner. But the little chorus that went on around me as I waited silently in the African jungle surpassed the wildest fancies of the Orient.

When I moved, the babble (or gurgle) mysteriously died away. This was repeated several times until I began to wonder whether, after all, it was not a trick of the forest, with its unaccountable echoings and ghostlike sighings, which I had begun to appreciate so well. When I paused again at the bottom of the gully, however, the local intestinal disturbances became almost deafening, and I conceived a strong desire to see the perpetrators of this outstanding performance. Every time

I moved to try to peer among the undergrowth, the noise ceased abruptly, only to commence again more loudly than ever. Annoyed and mystified, I crouched in the path among the roots, waiting for my tormentors to show their hands, or any other portions of their anatomies.

As they did not do so, but were getting uncomfortably close on both sides of the path, I conceived a plan. By a method learned at school and employed with marked success around the coffee-pot in the less accessible parts of the Orient, I joined the chorus, weakly at first, but with ever-increasing volume — if I may put it that way. The results were beyond my wildest hopes — and, for that matter, fears. The accompaniment of my jungle acquaintances came closer around me, though I had thought that they were already as close as they could be without showing themselves.

This was very awkward, for it now appeared that they were of considerable size, and, if judged by the only sounds they uttered in comparison with the same produced by man, they would have been about twice the size of an elephant. I indulged in a hurried zoölogical stocktaking of all the inhabitants of the West African tropical forests that I knew of. Nothing seemed to fit the case except chimpanzees and bush pigs, yet the former should be away up in the trees and the latter would certainly have given other fair warning of their identity. I consequently gained in inquisitiveness though also in uneasiness.

A few moments later I had dropped positively all inquisitiveness, unbefitting as it may be for a zoölogist to admit it. Suddenly before me sat a most menacing figure, apparently wrapped in a gray shawl, and scrutinizing me with a pair of unpleasantly piercing eyes from beneath a scowling brow. He (or she) and I both ceased our visceral

mutterings promptly and uttered a surprised 'Uh' so precisely in unison that I got an overpowering desire to giggle. This was, however, as quickly wafted away also, when zoölogical reasoning came to an abrupt halt. I had not suspected that drills (*Man-drillus leucophæus*), though baboons of a sort, went about in large, belching parties.

Now I had met baboons before, and although I took a great interest in their behavior and should have liked to return to camp with a fine specimen such as now sat complacently before me, I remembered that discretion was always the better part of valor when in their presence. I therefore stood up to go, trying to be as unhurried as I imagined I should be at a vicarage tea party, though I have never attended one. This simple movement, however, was heralded by unmistakable complaints from all sides in the form of the most unpleasant grunts. The old lady (or gentleman) before me also rose, but on all fours so that his or her posterior came into view. It happened to be bright pink at this time of the year, and I thought of that absurd Homeric description of the dawn as being 'rosy-fingered.'

This display had remarkable effects. The bushes parted on all sides and a surprising array of subhumanity presented itself, ranging from one obvious male of quite alarming proportions to the merest tiddlers with pale, flat faces quite unlike their dog-nosed, black-visaged elders and betters. Their movements were leisurely, as if they were taking their places for a boxing match; they chattered and grunted exactly like any crowd of pleasure-seeking human beings preparing for an entertaining display.

While all this taking-of-seats was going on, I was retreating gingerly backwards up the path, while trying to learn the rules of monkey ethics in the

raw. The outsize gentleman, however, seemed to have been appointed as door-man. He trotted into the path behind me and stood squarely upon three boulders, one for each back foot and one for his gnarled hands. This was all very unpleasant, and I found myself waiting with some trepidation to see what was the next item on the agenda. As they continued to sit and grunt to each other, it appeared to be up to me.

I don't expect you have ever been surrounded by a troop of expectant baboons, but if you have you will probably agree that it becomes extremely difficult to think up any suitable parlor tricks. Personally, my mind was a blank, especially as each part of the circle to which my back was turned in succession seemed to think its chance had come to grab a ringside seat, and, since one can't face all ways at once, the ring began to diminish rapidly. I remember thinking, stoically and hopefully, that drills are vegetable feeders and that I was not a vegetable although I doubtless looked like one. When the old gentleman yawned, however, and I had a glimpse of his three-inch fangs, I began to doubt the words of wisdom uttered by the worthy professor of my late and, at that moment, greatly lamented university.

I did remember that almost any animal, even a surprised tiger, will shy away if one stoops to pick up a stone and make pretense of throwing it. This I instantly put to the test, but in my excitement I picked up a stone and accidentally hurled it at the big yawning male with a force of which I did not believe myself capable. We were all greatly surprised when it found its mark in a glancing blow. This, combined with my sudden action, made the spectators jump backwards with some emphasis, so that I was given quite a lot of room to move about in. My target seemed quite angry, as might be

expected, and, as I stooped to gather more missiles, he waltzed about and returned the compliment with some vigor, scraping the ground with his hind feet, gathering up a small boulder in the process, and projecting it straight at me with considerable accuracy.

This heralded a great commotion. Apparently the show had begun. I hurled more stones in all directions, and although the admiring onlookers retreated each time, those on the opposite side advanced, the gentleman who had yawned so indulgently most of all. He was now very angry indeed, projecting stones and big blobs of spittle at me alternately as he waltzed about, presenting first his revolting, doglike visage and then his still more revolting and quite uncanine other end.

These tactics, combined with other stones and the fast-descending dusk, made me not only definitely frightened, but inexplicably angry, too. Once I nearly put a charge of lead into him, but luckily checked myself, realizing that this trump card would be even more useful later on when the difference of opinion became general, as matters appeared to be rapidly drifting in that direction.

During one of the periodic lulls between these diplomatic interchanges, now carried on in a more or less tense silence, one of the smallest and most youthful of my audience uttered a peevish squeal and bowled a small lump of earth at me, just as an underhand lob-bowler in a juvenile cricket match would do. The action was so ludicrous that in my decidedly agitated frame of mind I burst into roars of laughter. Why it seemed so screamingly funny I don't know; perhaps it

was n't really so at all. But my action proved a most fortunate one.

The brat's mother made a dive at her now cowering and shivering progeny, gathered it to her bosom, and bolted, followed by several other mothers and their offspring. The remaining 'stag party,' numbering some dozen, began running to and fro, looking surprised and angry. I continued laughing and shouting as if I were at a football match, and soon became quite incoherent from sheer nerves. I advanced on the old male, shouting, 'They've made a goal! Run, run, you old idiot! *Bonjour, mademoiselle, cochon! Nunca café con leche!*' — at the same time executing a spine-rocking rumba combined with all the other outlandish dances in my repertoire. He stopped dead in his tracks. His eyes opened wide and his whole face took on a quite ludicrously human expression. He muttered to himself. 'Standing aghast' was the only way to describe his poise, as if he were just as much shocked at my behavior as he was bewildered and frightened at what he saw. A few seconds he stood his ground, amazement written all over his face; then his nerve gave way and he shied like a dog. His final rout was accompanied by a flood of the choicest swearing from my cockney vocabulary.

With his hurried retreat 'to bush,' my way home was open before me; I wasted no time in taking it, swearing and bellowing with full conviction. Once on the crest of the incline, I sent a couple of shots below in an ecstasy of human bravado and with a feeling of bombastic superiority toward the mere beasts of the field over whom the power of speech had cast such a spell.

(To be continued)

A NATION OF ONLOOKERS?

BY JOHN R. TUNIS

I

THE inhabitants of the North American continent are a strange people, and the United States of all lands is the country of paradoxes. We talk incessantly of law and order, yet we are the most lawless race on earth. Our magazines and our movies teem with stories of love, but our business men are too rushed to do anything about it. We spend more money on education than any nation on the globe, and the total result seems to be order in our traffic lanes and disorder in our minds. We are the greatest sporting nation of the world, yet every fall forty million Americans — Dr. J. H. Nichols, director of athletics at Oberlin, estimates the number at twelve million weekly — pay an average of forty million dollars to watch twenty-two boys kick each other and a leather ball round a field.

The greatest nation of sportsmen on earth! What a familiar ring that slogan has. But wait a minute. Are we really a nation of sportsmen, of practising athletes? Of late I have begun to wonder. My doubts started last fall when I came across an article in the *Scientific Monthly* by Dr. Charles D. Snyder, professor of experimental physiology at Johns Hopkins University. He had a suspicion that our reputation as the leader of the athletic world might not be wholly supported by facts, a suspicion borne out by an investigation he made of the various scores in the

last Olympic Games held in Berlin in the summer of 1936.

His contention was that these scores did not entirely represent the relative merits of the different nations; that their sporting values were badly portrayed by the actual scores obtained — because some countries had a population of over a hundred millions of athletes to draw upon, whereas others had only a few millions from which to pick their team. Taking as a test the track and field events, and omitting such exotic and indigenous sports as cockroach racing, husband calling, and shin kicking, he discovered that on a basis of population Germany and the United States, who stood one and two in Berlin last summer, would not lead the family of athletic nations.

On the contrary, they were well down in the list, Germany at ninth and the United States in fourteenth place. The countries that were up front were small nations — Hungary, Sweden, Finland, Austria, Holland, and Switzerland, in the order named. As Professor Snyder showed, mere bigness does not guarantee athletic superiority. The windy contentions of American sports writers (myself included) that we were the greatest, the most wonderful sporting nation on earth do not stand up so well under investigation. However, smug in the belief that at least we had more participating athletes per capita than other

lands, I paid little attention to the learned professor. Then something occurred which made me think about the question.

It was a cold, snowy night last winter, and about eight-thirty I happened to pass by Madison Square Garden in New York. A riot was in progress. At least it seemed to me like a riot. Mounted reserves had been called out to deal with a mob of several hundred frenzied men and women who were trying to break into the arena. But the house was full and the doors closed. What do you suppose brought out these zealots? A Communist rally? Not at all. It was a basketball game between bush-league colleges from the Middle West.

Now when eighteen thousand and some persons pay two dollars and a quarter to watch a game of basketball on a snowy evening in March in New York, this fact seems to me to come under the heading of sporting news. Were we becoming a nation of spectators instead of games players? I investigated, and as one who for years believed in the myth of the Americans as a race of big, outdoor boys, I found it unpleasant to have my ideas upset. Harder still to have to admit myself in the wrong. But some little research obliges me to revise my estimate.

In the following pages I shall present for your annoyed inspection the results of my research, results which will doubtless be as upsetting to you as they were to me. Please remember one thing. The conclusions herein are not guesses. With several exceptions they are not my opinion, nor yet anyone's opinion. They are facts and figures. I do not rely on them, as Andrew Lang said a 'drunken man relies on a lamp post, for support rather than illumination,' but to show and illuminate a situation which has been much discussed, but about which little accurate information has ever been published. I

believe the facts are authentic. They come from the best of all possible sources — from Uncle Sam himself.

II

Ten years ago a fantastic promoter of professional sporting exhibitions for profit named Tex Rickard was sitting in his opulent office in Madison Square Garden recounting stories of Goldfield and the Nelson-Gans fight in the early days of the century. Madison Square Garden — the Garden of to-day, that is — was originally constructed for three things: prize fighting, bicycle racing, and wrestling. In 1929 Rickard died and the slump was on. Tunney by this time had retired, Dempsey was finished with active fighting, and boxing, like the stock market, fell into a slump from which it has never entirely recovered. The Garden appeared to be in a bad way; dividends ceased, as they did in so many other commercial undertakings of the period. So the management brought in a new executive. He was Colonel John Reed Kilpatrick, all-American end at Yale twenty-six years ago. His job was to start things moving again and pull the Garden out of the red.

About this time the pastimes for which the structure was built began to fall off in public interest. To-day big-time boxing is no more a money-maker for the Garden. In 1927 the Garden earned \$900,000, all of it from boxing; this year less than 5 per cent of its net earnings came from fighting. So the Colonel looked round for other games to amuse his clientele. He soon discovered them. Whereas attendance at boxing exhibitions at the Garden fell away from 450,000 in 1927 to 140,000 in 1937, professional hockey, a kind of fisticuffs on skates, played to about 250,000 spectators in 1927 and last winter drew a gate of 432,000, while amateur hockey, a form of sport as

amateur as a Spanish war, attracted 191,000 additional customers. The total number of persons watching hockey was therefore almost 400,000 greater in the Garden last winter than ten years previously.

Hockey was only one kind of athletic exhibitionism the canny Colonel made use of to satisfy Garden clients and pay a dividend to the stockholders. (Madison Square Garden Corporation resumed paying a small dividend in 1935, increasing it in 1936 and 1937.) Basketball, hitherto largely a sport for high schools and Middle Western colleges, came to the front. Teams were imported from the South and the open spaces of the West, greatly to the benefit of the gate and the Colonel's shareholders. Back in 1926 when Rickard was trying to arrange the Dempsey-Tunney fight, a tennis player named Vincent Richards turned professional. Rickard would probably have thought you crazy had you suggested that in ten years tennis would outdraw boxing matches at the Garden. But since then Tilden, Vines, Cochet, Perry, Lott, Barnes, Bell, Stofen, and others have become professionals, playing for money. The Perry-Vines match in the Garden last winter attracted 17,630, said to be the largest number ever to see a tennis match anywhere in the world.

Notice that while boxing and wrestling, exhibitions mostly for the devotees of pool parlors and corner drug stores, were losing ground, sports for another group took their places and drew crowds. The spectators of 1927 watched boxing, wrestling, and six-day bike races. To-day professional exhibitions attract other classes of society. College graduates watch hockey, lawn tennis, and basketball, which they once played. Football stars of the gridiron can be found at professional football matches to-day, and this new form of sporting exhibitionism played to over

100,000 in a short season of three months last fall. Other spectator sports attracting a new clientele are constantly being discovered. So-called amateur runners built up by press publicity come to the big cities to compete in track meets that are often sellouts before the doors are opened.

This past winter ice skating for the first time officially became a spectacle at Madison Square Garden for the delight of the customers. Under the guise of charity, ladies and gentlemen danced, pirouetted, and otherwise performed on skates to the amusement of capacity throngs on three evenings in succession. Sixty-four thousand clients, with not a seat vacant any evening, saw them, and shortly afterward the Silver Skates gymkhana sponsored by a New York tabloid filled the Garden once more. Miss Maribel Vinson, première American 'skateuse,' if that be the term, officially turned professional in the spring, and next winter will be a member of a troupe ruled by Bill O'Brien, the promoter, to titillate the multitudes in the manner of Tilden and the *soi-disant* amateurs of the college basketball and track teams.

Your reaction to these facts will no doubt at first be the same as mine. How splendid that the sports-loving public can watch the gyrations of Miss Vinson and the gymnastics of Mr. Tilden! To watch inevitably arouses in us all the desire to emulate. These thousands of spectators all over the country who for the first time see Perry or Tilden or Miss Vinson or Miss Henie will immediately rush out to buy skates and rackets for themselves. Suppose the O'Brien troupe is watched by an average of 10,000 persons in ten cities next winter, suppose the Garden in New York is packed three nights in succession. That certainly indicates an increased interest in sport, does it not?

No, it does not. What it indicates

apparently is an increased interest in *watching*, a vastly different thing. People watch Miss Vinson and then, filled with a burning desire to perform, go out and learn to skate themselves — at least so I always supposed. Unfortunately I was wrong. That is, unless the figures given me from Washington government bureaus are incorrect.

III

If by any chance you are convinced, as I was, that the Americans are by nature and training a race of games players and lovers of active sport, you may be able to explain the following figures taken from the Biennial Census of Manufactures and released on December 22, 1936, by William L. Austin, Bureau of the Census, Department of Commerce, Washington, D. C.

The year 1929 was one of our banner years in sports; or rather — let me be specific — in participating games; in persons playing for the fun of it rather than watching from Section 2, Portal B, Row I, Seats 8 and 9, and would you mind moving over so the lady in the mink coat can squeeze into her place? In that year the total sum spent on athletic goods (not including firearms and ammunition) was \$52,288,728. In 1931, two years later, the figure had fallen to \$49,257,477, and in 1935 to \$34,863,730 — or in five years a drop of approximately \$18,000,000, which amounts to 30 per cent of the total sum spent in 1929.

Final figures for the year 1936 are unfortunately not yet ready for publication. Sporting-goods dealers asserted to me that there was a 10 per cent increase in volume for the year just past. Possibly, although such facts as were available on the first of July do not bear them out. But even so this would make the total sum spent on sports in the United States still 14 per cent under the sum spent in 1929. A sport-

ing-goods magazine, early in January 1937, tells the story succinctly — possibly too much so — in a headline stating, 'Sporting Goods Industry Up 38%.' Then in smaller letters just underneath is this sentence: 'Must add another 69% to equal 1929.'

It may well be that these figures are inexact. For instance, everyone knows that 1929 was a boom year, and that prices have dropped in every business since then, so any comparison must necessarily be inaccurate. I make here no claims to accuracy, although again let me remind you that the figures are not mine but Uncle Sam's. However, let us look at them in another way. To play games you have to possess some equipment and a ball. You cannot play golf, tennis, baseball, football, basketball, or dozens of other outdoor games without a ball. The sales of balls in this country over the past few years have therefore some significance. Now even when one allows for the improvement in quality of tennis and golf balls in recent years, and the fact that they last longer, the figures on the sales of these necessities of sport are illuminating.

Again let me quote from the Department of Commerce. In 1929, a total of 709,532 dozen baseballs were sold. In 1935 this number had dropped to 550,432 dozen, or a fall of 20 per cent. Even more significant is the sale of basketballs. Basketball is generally admitted to be one of the most popular of playing sports, and Dr. Fog Allen of the University of Kansas claims it has grown faster than any other game in recent years. He is generally regarded as an authority upon basketball, and his statements are impressive. Certainly basketball is popular, especially throughout the Middle West; and in one state, Indiana, there were last year only eighty high schools playing football as against eight hundred competing in the state basketball tournament. I should therefore like to

see the good Doctor at work on the government statistics touching on this fast-growing game. In 1929, 1,382,460 basketballs were sold in the United States. The number had fallen to 966,911 in 1931, and two years later to 749,116. This is a decrease in this fast-growing sport of almost 50 per cent.

Yes, it's inspiring to watch Miss Vinson and Mr. Tilden; it makes us want to get out and crack a backhand down the line or do figure eights on the pond. But does it, actually? Not if the figures from Washington are to be trusted. Sales of tennis goods fell from \$4,650,543 in 1929 to \$4,266,378 in 1931, and then to \$2,854,290 in 1935. Skating, especially fancy skating, has had a great vogue in recent years, but there is n't any overwhelming evidence of it at the store counters. For 684,964 pairs of ice skates were sold in 1929, and 523,075 in 1935. Add 10 per cent if you like for 1936, as the dealers claim, and you are still 100,000 pairs of skates below 1929, notwithstanding all the publicity and attention skating has had for the last few winters in the daily press.

Perhaps the most striking figure of all comes from the sale of golf balls. With a total of 2,814,400 dozen balls sold in 1929, the number dropped to 2,297,778 in 1931, and 1,492,578 in 1935. Last year the number fell to 1,400,455. In other words, fewer golf balls were sold in 1936 than for any of the previous seven years. When analyzed, government statistics show that golf supplies account for almost one third of the entire volume of athletic goods (not including firearms and ammunition) sold in the United States. Between 1929 and 1935, dollar volume of sales was nearly cut in half, falling from a sum of \$21,067,216, which was spent on golf in 1929, to \$10,233,809.

Several different and unrelated sports

show an increase in recent years. The able Mr. Herb Graffis in his essay, 'Sit-Down Strike in Sports,' explains this as due partly to the female influence. The girls, so he says, enjoy being photographed in culottes and ski suits, and no small part of the increase in sales of ski and winter-sports equipment is to be attributed to the ladies. More power to them. Total sales of football equipment have dropped off more than 50 per cent in the past six or seven years. On the other hand, more footballs were sold in 1935 than in 1929, reversing the general trend. Does this mean that interest in football is growing, while interest in other playing sports is declining? Hard to say. At any rate, 530,681 footballs were sold in 1929, as against 1,059,064 in 1931, and 910,592 in 1935. Value, however, fell away over half a million dollars in the same period, so deductions would be dangerous.

Right here I wish to depart from this Sargasso Sea of facts and figures, which has doubtless shaken your convictions as much as it did mine when first it came before my gaze, and hazard a guess — nothing more. In years past I have at various times and in various places attempted to show that interest in playing games and sports for participants was on the increase. This thesis may well have been entirely wrong. But my belief is that, when published, this contention was at least approximately correct. Figures show that during the boom years, and through the late Coolidge and Hoover eras, there was unquestionably a growing interest in playing games and sports of all kinds. Golf courses and tennis clubs flourished. New games like badminton and paddle tennis were introduced. Came the depression — and with the depression a change in our athletic habits.

People could no longer afford eighteen-dollar tennis rackets and twenty-

four-dollar caddy bags. (The sales of caddy bags dropped from 430,357 in 1929 to 31,908 in 1935!) They turned to simpler and less expensive sports — to garden games and sports like archery, deck tennis, softball. Or, more likely, they gave up playing for the time being and took the whole family out for a ride in the car. This seems to be borne out by the figures of clubs belonging to the United States Lawn Tennis Association. In the year 1910, there were 160 member clubs; in 1920, 294 member clubs; in 1932 about 900 clubs were members, and the number had shrunk to 748 according to the yearbook of the Association dated 1936, and to 701 on June 1, 1937. Golf shows the same trend. In 1930, there were 1134 clubs affiliated with the United States Golf Association. This year there were 787.

In other words, it's less effort to watch than to play. Despite an estimated increase in our population of some six millions since 1929, millions who ought surely to add greatly to the number of practising athletes, there has been no such visible addition to those who are lovers and players of games and sports in the open air. Attendance is up in most spectator sports; more people are watching football and baseball games, going to horse races. It appears we are slowly becoming a nation of onlookers. If so, we could wish that those who provide for our comfort would provide for our comfort. Anyone who has had to sit all afternoon on a hard plank watching a horse show in the sun, or on the cold concrete of a stadium some rainy day in late November, will agree that our professional sports promoters don't know their job. Let's have things done as they are at Wimbledon, where the seats are covered, spaced off with arms, and you have a thick cushion on which you can sit and slumber peacefully in the open air.

IV

If we are becoming a nation of onlookers there are certainly three factors at work in this country to-day that have a bearing on the question — factors that are increasing the sit-down strike in sports on the part of a supposedly athletic-minded public. These three factors are the radio, the automobile, and the movies, with the pulp magazines — called by Professor Jay B. Nash, of New York University, 'the mental flophouse of the American public' — a close fourth.

Leisure, and more leisure, has been the cry of governments, our own especially. But it seems that the citizen of this country does not, with some exceptions, know how to use leisure when he gets it. We have seen that he is not turning to outdoor games and sports as he should, considering the increase in population. Are facilities lacking? No, for whereas the number of private tennis clubs and golf clubs has decreased in recent years, there are more public facilities available than ever before. Latest reports from Washington dated January 1, 1937, state that President Roosevelt approved outlays for athletic fields, parks, stadia, swimming pools, golf courses, tennis courts, and fish and game work to the amount of \$340,059,174 of WPA moneys in the six months from July 1, 1936 to January 1, 1937 — this from a total sum allotted of \$4,000,000,000. The facilities are there waiting. There are places for outdoor exercise available for every class of the community, and some municipalities are waging intelligent campaigns of sport promotion in an attempt to get the people playing in the open air. But these facilities don't seem to be used as they should be. Rather than play, the American of 1937 finds it easier to watch someone else play for him, or else, worse still, he will snap on the nearest station and

listen to the game described over the air.

In 1926 there were 1,889,614 radio headsets in use in the United States. Last year there were more than that number of radios in the State of Kansas alone, and a total all over the country of 21,455,799, besides an additional 3,000,000 in automobiles. 'The greatest mental flophouse,' Dr. Nash thinks, 'is in front of the radio. There are to-day 28,000,000 radios blaring out 160,000,000 hours a day of advertising, including patent medicines that are forbidden the use of the mails. In their presence no man can read or think.'

Another important demand on our time to-day is the moving picture. No moving picture has ever been a financial success in the United States unless it was pitched at the mental age of twelve years, and painfully few pictures are aimed at a higher mental level. Yet we throng the movie palaces. In 1927, the United States Department of Commerce Bulletin, Motion Picture Statistics, gave the total yearly attendance of 57,000,000. At the height of the depression, in 1932 and 1933, 60,000,000 each year went to the pictures. According to Poor's Investment Survey, the year 1936 set a new high mark for moving-picture attendance with 4,180,000,000. If you wonder why the American people are n't playing games outdoors any more, there's one answer. People may not have time for sport as they once did, but they have time for Gable and Garbo. In 1926, according to the Department of Commerce figures again, there were 19,954,437 automobiles in the United States. Last year 24,913,400 cars, or about five millions more, were on the roads. You cannot play games when you are driving a car.

A recent survey estimated that 10,000,000 pulp magazines were sold each month in the United States alone, with three readers to each copy. Multi-

ply those figures by twelve! How does the American adult spend his leisure time? The chances are eight to ten that he will drive his car along Route 168, watch a 'moom' picture, listen to the Itty Bitty Kiddie Hour, or else enjoy a few inches in the bleachers while someone on the field plays for him.

'Granted freedom,' says Professor Nash, 'many men go to sleep physically and mentally. Not having the drive for creative arts, they turn to predigested pastimes prepared in little packages at a dollar a throw. This has literally thrown us into the gladiatorial stage of Rome in which the number of participants becomes fewer and the size of the grandstands larger. Spectatoritis has almost become synonymous with Americanism and the end is not yet. The stages will get smaller and the rows of seats will mount higher. Magnifiers and lights carry the messages to the far corners and one can perform for ten thousand as well as for ten. Twenty-five million persons pay a million dollars in a fall afternoon to pass in at the gates of football stadiums, so that they may watch gladiatorial contests carried on under the holy banner of college education.'

To-day one reads of a course planned at Bucknell which is to help the student to watch football and kindred spectator sports. Then there are the good folk like Dr. John M. Harmon, professor of physical education at Boston University, who proclaims to the alumni of the institution as follows: 'Athletics provide an excellent diversion while not upon your job. If you turn loose and yell as you did when you were a student, you will get as much health exercise as upon the golf course or the bowling alley.' If one did not read such stuff in print one would find it hard to believe. The explanation, however, is simple. By doing as the esteemed Doctor wishes you will not

only get your health exercise, but you will also swell the coffers of the football war chest. Dr. Harmon's other title is Director of Athletics.

V

What they are doing to the participating sports that remain in this country is getting to be funny. Before me is a photograph entitled, 'Taking the Walk Out of Golf.' It portrays two damozels (in shorts, of course) seated in a large bicycle chair at the Chamberlain Country Club at Old Point Comfort, Virginia. Their golf bags on their knees, they are being wheeled over the course by a dusky caddy. All they are obliged to do is rise at given moments and smite the ball.

Well, everyone to his own taste in sport. Some years ago I was castigated by the editor of an æsthetic sporting magazine for my lack of knowledge of what constituted real sport. He pointed out, if my memory is right, that real sport had nothing to do with man's contest against man, but with man's contest against nature and wild life. Again, everyone to his own taste, and, since I do not wish to arrogate to myself supreme knowledge on the subject, let us have a look at those noble sports in which man competes against wild life and nature. I refer to those where, aided by several dozen of his fellows, he pursues a lonely fox to the death, or chases a stag until it throws itself into the sea and swims away to die. Let us check on the figures of those intensely active sports such as hunting ducks from a blind, or fishing from the bank of a river. According to statistics from the ever-reliable Department of Commerce, hunting and fishing, next to golf, are the most popular of all American outdoor diversions — or sports, if I may borrow that term momentarily.

In the six years between 1929 and

1935, the value of fishing tackle alone dropped from \$9,760,370 in 1929 to \$6,761,170 in 1931 and then came back to \$7,875,393 in 1935. Total sales of fishing rods were 1,495,377 in 1929 and 1,468,403 in 1935, only a slight decrease. Apparently fishing has lost less in recent years than other forms of sport. You cannot get much fun out of fishing by watching, and save in the Sportsman's Shows they haven't yet managed to professionalize it. Hunting and shooting equipment (not including firearms and ammunition) fell from \$1,129,756 in 1929 to \$649,392 in 1931, and \$413,656 in 1935.

My friends in the sporting-goods industry explain to me that these figures do not tell the whole story; that there has been an enormous increase in sales of fishing and hunting goods in recent years. They were so certain that I took the trouble to find out how sales of hunting and fishing licenses stood. There was an increase in Wisconsin of about 30 per cent in fishing and 10 per cent in hunting licenses from 1935 to 1936. But in Connecticut there were 18,885 hunting licenses sold in 1935 and 18,361 in 1936, a slight decrease. Fishing licenses totaled 23,198 in 1935, as against 23,851 in 1936, an increase of about 3 per cent. Partial figures for the State of Pennsylvania showed an increase of about 12 per cent, and New York State showed a rise of about 5 per cent from 1935 to 1936.

Likewise skeptical of claims of my friends who assure me the year 1937 will show an increase in the sales of sporting-goods equipment of about 15 per cent, I went again to government sources for information. Sales for the first three months of the year, the only months for which it was possible to obtain figures at the time of writing, totaled \$1,371,663, as against \$1,325,182 in 1936, or a difference of \$46,481, about 3½ per cent.

In February in New York every classi-

fication of merchandise showed an increase in sales over the same month in 1936, furniture leading with a gain of 24 per cent, books gaining 22 per cent, shoes 13 per cent, women's clothes 12 per cent, and luggage 11 per cent. Sporting goods ranked twelfth in the list, with a gain of less than 5 per cent.

In April, radios gained 29 per cent over last year, furniture 28 per cent, jewelry 21 per cent, home furnishings 13 per cent, books 12 per cent, and sporting goods 12 per cent. In other words, if these figures show anything it is that the first-quarter sales, provided they are any indication, prove that there will not be any marked increase over the 1935 or 1936 figures in the sporting-goods industry — or that the American, that great lover of active games, is not starting to hit the ball instead of watching.

The United States has three times the population of the British Isles, yet more tennis balls are sold yearly in England than in the United States. In England alone there are 1260 badminton clubs. The British like to play games. Apparently we do not. How to explain all these facts is beyond me. Where did the myth of our athletic zeal ever get started? Possibly the sports writers, in their habit of extolling the victories of native champions and explaining away their defeats, have something to answer for. Nor is this to say that the American sports writer is more chauvinistic than those in France, England, or Germany. He is less so. But American victories are glorified and magnified to such an extent that we are apt to regard ourselves as the greatest race of sports lovers on earth.

My love of active games dates from a boyhood in which I learned to play tennis on public courts with great difficulty. My brother and I had new balls twice a year and a new racket far less

often. No one showed me how to play or took the slightest interest in my game. I watched the older and better players and read books on the sport from the public library. I remember walking the four miles to Longwood to watch Bill Larned play Laurie Doherty in the final round of the Davis Cup in 1903, and paying a quarter to stand all afternoon on a soap box. As a result, the passionate love of the game which I developed was never lost, and very likely I shall drop dead some day following my service to the net.

Now, having some slight interest in the mental and physical education of a young gentleman not entirely unrelated to me, I observe with interest his reaction to the game of tennis. He learned the sport, which everyone will admit is active, in a private school in the West. He was well and truly taught by an excellent teacher and player. To-day he seldom plays, and then with little zest. Although he is a practising athlete, a first-class swimmer and skier, he has little affection for tennis. Why? Mostly, I am sure, because he was obliged to take lessons in the sport precisely as he was obliged to study for his College Boards.

Maybe this American method of forcing games down the throats of our children is one reason for the apparently lessening interest in athletic participation. I don't know; I'm not sure; I'm merely suggesting. Possibly our desire for financial gain, with the resultant spread of spectator sports and the increase all over the land of Bowls, Stadiums, Arenas, and Gardens, has something to do with it. Perhaps the increased newspaper attention to the champions and their victories in recent years is a factor also. Whatever the reasons, and I don't pretend to know exactly what they are, the facts are plain. Plain too is the trend which sport is taking in this country. Unless all signs and all official figures are mis-

leading, that trend is not a healthy one, either.

The nations of Europe to-day, after many generations in which sport was never noticed, have suddenly become aware of the importance of the healthy citizen. In Germany to-day all sport is regimented under the Nazi Party, headed by Reichssportkommissar Tschammer und Osten, who controls the policies of athletics and athletes. The aim, as in Russia and Italy, is simply to build cannon fodder. A despicable subservience of the ideals of sport to base ends? Granted, but can we not learn something from their methods which would be of value? Do we have to pretend that it is no one's business whether the people choose to watch from the bleachers or play on the field? Already the French and English have taken a leaf from the dictator's book. Under the Blum cabinet France founded a 'secretariat for sport and the organization of leisure,' headed by a young man named Leo Lagrange. England set aside two million pounds from her defense programme to raise the nation from a C-3 to an A-1 standard physically, and has established a great national school for the training of sports teachers and physical-training instructors. In other words, every government but our own appears to be officially aware of the importance of spreading health by the proper use of leisure time.

Now such methods in the United States will immediately be condemned as regimentation and one more example of governmental interference in the private lives of the citizens. Maybe so. Yet there is need for official recognition of the problem. Why is the health of the people less important than their commerce, their labor relations, or their defense? We are the cleverest nation on earth in the subtle arts of advertising. Why not a national campaign under government supervision to sell sport, real sport, to the American? The automobile manufacturers would probably fight such an idea; so would the movie producers. Hence the necessity for action by the government for the entire people.

This campaign then would be nationwide. It would enlist all those who are interested in sport — the players of games, the graduates of schools and colleges, the heads of physical education departments, the teachers of physical education, and the athletic societies. Its purpose would be to get people out of their autos on to the courts, the golf links, the bridle paths, the mountain trails, the streams, and into the woods. It could be done, and I believe it would be worth trying, for, even if we have been sitting down these past few years, we are essentially a games-loving race. Certainly you will agree that a nation of onlookers is not a pretty sight.

THE GOLDEN AGE OF SALEM

BY CAROLINE HOWARD KING

[CAROLINE HOWARD KING was born in Salem on May 4, 1822. Before her death, in 1909, she came to be regarded as the oldest and certainly one of the most charming inhabitants of that ancient port. Her recollections were written between the years 1898 and 1905 for the delectation of an intimate circle of younger relatives. — THE EDITORS]

I

I WILL tell of the very earliest memory of my life, which is of seeing Lafayette when he came to Salem in 1824. I was only two years and a half old, and was taken to my father's office at the corner of Essex and Washington Streets to see the procession, and I distinctly remember seeing Lafayette sitting in an open carriage, with his hat in his hand, and bowing gracefully to the cheering multitudes.

There has always been a tradition in the family that in the afternoon of that day, when visitors were dropping in and telling their experiences with the great man, someone turned to me and said, 'Well, little one, did you see Lafayette too?' 'Oh yes,' I instantly replied, 'he looked up at the window, and nodded to me, and said, "How do, Kid King!"'

I am afraid that this story may cast a doubt upon the veracity of the reminiscences to follow, but I think I must have believed my story at the time, for my father said he was much amused, as

Lafayette looked up at the window in passing and bowed in return to the enthusiastic greeting of its occupants, to hear a little voice at his side say, 'How do, Lafayette!'

As the pet name of my childhood may occur often in the following pages, perhaps I had better say at the beginning that, incredible as it may seem now, I was then always called 'the Kid,' from an especial lightness and agility — thus anticipating the slang of the present day. And I have great sympathy with the modern revulsion against the use of nicknames and diminutives, having all my life been a victim of one. Was it not hard for a sensitive girl, who rejoiced in the fine high-sounding name of Caroline Howard King, to be doomed to the ludicrous insignificance of being always known among her friends as Kiddy King?

There has been so much written, and so charmingly written, about the Salem of fifty or sixty years ago that I should hesitate to add my mite to the interesting record if I did not take courage by remembering that no two individual experiences are alike, and that the same objects looked at from a different point of view present utterly changed aspects and color.

Then too, as I am now about 'the oldest inhabitant,' I may be considered to speak 'as one having authority.' But I want to say in the beginning that I do not pretend to any

historical or statistical accuracy. I am not sure of my dates, and I know that I cannot add any valuable facts to Felt's *Annals of Salem*, or any other learned history, but my mind is full of detached pictures of the Salem of my childhood and youth, and perhaps I may be able to give the young people of the present day some details of the lives of their grandmothers and great-grandmothers which have not been described by others.

The Salem of seventy years ago was a very different town from the hustling, bustling, noisy city of to-day. There were no factories then, and no street or steam cars, not even an omnibus or an English sparrow. My father's house was on Essex Street, opposite the Barton Square Church, and except on Saturday mornings, when the market men came in from the outlying farms with their carts of country produce, the street near our house was as quiet as a village road, the passing of a carriage was an event, and the robins sang all day in the elm trees in the churchyard opposite. It is difficult to believe now that Essex Street below North Street was a peaceful thoroughfare, with no noisy traffic, no rattling wheels, and with the stillness of a summer's morning broken only by the echoing footsteps of the occasional passers-by. And always at the same hour of the day could we be sure to see certain citizens of credit and renown pass the house. Among them was Dr. Brazer, the minister of the North Church, a most stately, dignified figure, who, just at twelve o'clock, slowly stepped along the shady side of the street, on his way to the Atheneum. At this early date the Atheneum was open only between twelve and one o'clock. He held a large black umbrella over his head, and his long black gown floated out behind him. This was not his ministerial gown, as I then firmly believed it to be, but a kind of dressing gown, black or colored,

which gentlemen wore on the street in hot weather. In those days the clergymen were held in great reverence, and I always watched his stately progress down the street with a kind of fearful interest.

After the last whisk of Dr. Brazer's gown had disappeared in the distance, Judge Cummins would come prancing along, in a gay flowered long gown, cordial and genial, bowing and smiling to everyone he met — a cheerful, homely figure, in everything just the opposite to the dignified pastor. Or perhaps the tall imposing form of Captain West, with shining shoe buckles and knee breeches and his hair tied in a long queue behind; or Mr. Saltonstall, beaming through his spectacles, kindly and gracious, who could never pass even a child of his acquaintance without a pleasant word of greeting. Another very familiar figure on Essex Street in those days was Daniel Dutch — Deputy Dutch, as he was called. He was a short, sturdy little man with a look of Napoleon about his head and face. I always crossed the street when I saw him coming, for the name of Sheriff had a fearful sound in my childish ears; but I well remember his quaint upright figure in a long coat and knee breeches trudging along Essex Street with his little dog at his heels.

And then, just as the bell rang at one o'clock, these same gentlemen, accompanied by many well-known men of business, would be seen returning to dinner. The one and nine o'clock bells were an important feature in the Salem of those days, and in a measure regulated the movements of every household. Everybody dined at one o'clock then. Shops were closed from one to two, and a greater stillness reigned over the always quiet streets during that hour. And when the curfew tolled at nine o'clock it was the signal for the peaceful little community to lay aside work and play and prepare for the

night's rest, and usually by ten o'clock all lights were out, and by eleven silence and quiet brooded over the little town.

But sometimes the peaceful quiet of this part of Essex Street was turned into a gay scene when the brilliant procession of the Circus made its annual entrance into the town. And a great day that was, not only for the children, but for grown people as well. The schools were adjourned until the parade was over, and tradesmen refused to work on Circus Day. There being no railroad in those days, the Circus had to travel on the highroads, and usually came into Salem over the turnpike, stopping just after passing the Toll-house to marshal its clans and arrange the great entering show. Once, I remember, it did not appear at the appointed time, and we children were thrilled by the news that the great elephant had refused to step upon the Floating Bridge, and after fruitless urgings and coaxings the whole Circus was obliged to turn back and come into town through South Salem.

It was usually the custom for them to travel very early in the morning, and this reminds me that once when the long train was passing our beach on the Beverly Shore, on its way to Gloucester, an early-rising neighbor was lucky enough to see all the elephants, great and small, driven into the sea for a bath, and he described their clumsy gambols as infinitely amusing. He said the great awkward beasts played about like a troop of schoolboys, filling their trunks with water and squirting it over their companions, while a female elephant attended to the baths and toilets of her babies with human carefulness. The huge creatures became so excited, at last, by their unwonted freedom that the keepers found it difficult to control them and bring them back to the road, and our neighbor said that at one time they seemed much inclined to rush up

into our woods and make a second Declaration of Independence.

There was a great commotion at one time in Salem because it was rumored that a boa constrictor, the largest of a cage of snakes owned by a Mr. Pond who lived in the upper part of Essex Street, had escaped, and was nowhere to be found. It was a fearful time, but it had its funny side, too. People would be seen on the street anxiously looking all round as they walked, thinking they saw the serpent's head projecting round a corner, or a shining coil in every dooryard. Gardens were scrupulously avoided, as probable lurking places for the monster, and fruit and flowers remained ungathered for weeks.

But at night the panic reached its height. It was in summer, yet everybody slept with closed windows and doors, and nervous people fancied snaky eyes peering at them from under the bed, and forked tongues darting at them from dark corners.

The people living on Chestnut Street felt an especial terror lest the monster should have taken refuge in their overarching elms, and might at any moment come coiling and pouncing down upon them. One old lady, who had in her seventy years borne 'the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune' with undaunted courage, utterly refused to stir from her house, and carefully kept doors and windows closed during the panic. But we all have our weak side, and Mrs. Ward had a holy horror of things that creep and things that crawl, never walking in Chestnut Street in cankerworm time without holding an umbrella over her head. So she sat at home, straight as a poplar tree (for she had never touched the back of a chair in her life), tremblingly awaiting the sound of the fatal hiss, or the sight of the snaky head, until set free by the report of the capture of the boa.

We were at Beverly at the time, deeming ourselves entirely safe, as the way to reach us from Salem was over Beverly Bridge, and we knew the stern ways of the tollhouse keeper there well enough to be sure that he would never let even a traveling boa pass without paying toll, which would probably be the life of his Snakeship, as the toll taker was a brave and active man.

I remember one warm summer evening as we were sitting on our piazza, discussing the whereabouts of the hero of the hour, and congratulating ourselves on our secure position, someone threw a bombshell into our camp of safety by suggesting that the snake might have gone to Danvers, and, crossing Spite Bridge, might even now be on his winding way to Beverly. We looked at each other with doubt and terror, and, just then a rustling sound coming from some bushes near the house, in a moment the whole family and guests made a rush for the front door, closing it fast behind us, only to burst into a fit of laughter as a step was heard on the piazza and a neighbor's face looked in at the window.

Some weeks afterward a boa constrictor was found in the woods in Milton that was supposed to be our escaped snake, but no one could be sure of his identity, and it was long before Salem people lost the air and aspect of fear and caution, reminding one of Coleridge's lines: —

Like one that on a lonesome road
Doth walk in fear and dread . . .
Because he knows a frightful fiend
Doth close behind him tread.

II

It was a custom in our family that if a child was ill at night she should be brought into the parents' bedroom and put into a trundle bed, which in the

daytime was pushed under the larger bed. Now once upon a time, when I was about four years old, I had a feverish cold, and after having been dosed with squills and balsam drops, much to my delight I was promoted to the trundle bed, rolled out with a sleepy rumble. I was tucked in by loving hands, the lamp was taken away, and I fell fast asleep. But soon either my cold or some unexpected noise awakened me, and peeping out from my many coverings, I saw a bright little picture of fireside comfort. A wood fire was burning in the Franklin stove; the 'light stand' (as we always called a pretty old-fashioned three-legged round table), with two brass lamps upon it, was drawn up cosily in front of the fire, while on one side sat my mother with her workbasket and on the other my father, wrapped in a long Russian dressing gown, a real coat of many colors, reading *A Midsummer Night's Dream* aloud to her, true Darby and Joan fashion. (And apropos of that Franklin stove, I began my literary education by learning my letters from the words 'Robert Brookhouse, Salem, Mass.,' which were moulded on its iron front.)

For a time I lay very quietly watching them, soothed by the sound of my father's melodious voice, and perhaps unconsciously by the music of the wonderful words he was reading, though at first I did not take in their meaning. But presently my attention was roused by some prank of Puck's and I laughed aloud. My mother started. 'Bless me, I do believe we have waked the Kid,' and in a moment she was by the bedside, where, finding me with burning cheeks and unnaturally bright eyes, she told my father to take the lamps away, while she used every effort to quiet me off to sleep again. But all was of no avail. I burst into tears, demanding more stories about Cobweb and Peaseblossom and Mustardseed. In

vain my mother tried the usually potent charm of 'There was a little woman as I've heard tell' and 'Time Kid and I were at home, half an hour ago,' the apparent personality of which usually excited the keenest interest in my childish mind. I refused to be comforted, and my mother was at her wit's end, until my father, with wiser intuition, whispered as he bent over to kiss me good-night, 'Don't cry, Kid; be a good child and go to sleep now, and I will read you all about the fairies to-morrow.'

That was all I needed; my father's word was never broken, and I was soon again in the Land of Nod, or rather in Fairyland, for my mother said that once in the night she heard me laughing and murmuring something about 'Titany,' as if the fairy queen were still holding court in my small brain.

The Salem Crier was a well-known figure of my childhood. He was a tall thin old man wearing spectacles, and carrying a large bell which he rang loudly at the corner of each street. He was always surrounded by a group of children, and I well remember the tragic tones of his voice, emphasized with solemn ringings of his deep-toned bell, as he called, 'Lost, lost, lost,' and how I trembled, and the tears came to my eyes, when he read from his paper, 'A small child, strayed from her home, with a red gown and a white aporn on, and no hat or cloak to cover her.' Somehow that 'white aporn' gave an additional pathos to the picture of the lost child in my mind. And the glee and pride with which I once heard him cry, 'Lost, lost, lost, a small red cow — the finder will be suitably rewarded by returning her to 258 Essex Street.' It was *our* cow, and no words can describe the sense of distinction I felt, nor the pity for those poor children standing round who had not a small red cow to be lost and cried!

III

When I was about twelve years old I was invited to make a visit in Newburyport, at the house of an aunt — not a really-truly aunt, but one of the natural-born aunts to all children, who are often nearer and dearer than the genuine article. I was very fond of Aunt Nanny, and was very eager to accept her invitation, though, as it came in the middle of winter, my parents hesitated about letting me go. However, weather has very little to do with the good times of children, and my entreaties prevailed; so one cold afternoon, in January 1834, I found myself in the stage on my way to Newburyport, full of joyful anticipations of my visit.

As we traveled briskly along the smooth road, I became conscious of an increasing chill in the air, and my feet grew like ice, but the cold was all forgotten when the stage stopped at Aunt Nanny's door, and I saw her kind smiling face waiting to welcome me. I had never stayed with her before, and only knew that she lived alone with her father, who was a very old man. In those days there were no hot-air furnaces, or entry stoves, and the halls and entries were like the arctic regions, so Aunt Nanny said that, as tea was almost ready, I had better take off my outside wraps by the stove in the warm parlor. People lived and moved and had their being in one room in winter then, and I was much pleased to see a very tempting-looking tea table laid for three people close to the stove.

Presently Mr. Jones came in (that was not his name, but it will do for the present purpose) and I was introduced to him, and we sat down to tea. He was a very old man, and, having been brought up with a great deference for old age, I thought it was proper to speak to him, so I turned to him and said politely, 'It is a cold day, sir.' In a

minute he jumped round at me, and exclaimed in a stentorian voice, 'Hey, what do you say?' A little frightened, I repeated my not very original remark, but his dull ears did not appreciate it; for again he roared out, 'Hey, Nancy, what does the little lady say?' 'She says it is a cold day, Father,' said Aunt Nanny, her eyes twinkling with fun, and then she said low to me, 'Father is very deaf; you need not try to talk to him, dear.'

Somewhat disconcerted by the result of my effort at politeness, I subsided into silence, except once when Mr. Jones handed me a dish of Plum Island plums, a preserve in which I especially delighted, and I shouted at the top of my voice, 'Thank you, sir,' only to be followed by 'What does the little lady say now, Nancy? Does n't she like plums?' and the mortifying flatness of Aunt Nanny's answer, 'She says "Thank you, sir," and she does like plums.' I felt ill at ease, and was much relieved when the old gentleman had retired to his study, for he was afflicted with the loudest and most explosive cough I had ever heard, which seemed to be brought on by every effort he made to speak; and try as I would to control my nerves, I could not prevent a sudden start out of my chair every time this startling pistol shot was fired off close to my ear.

But the evening passed off happily in pleasant talk with Aunt Nanny, except that occasionally Mr. Jones would put his head in at the door and roar out, 'Glass two below, Nancy,' 'Glass five below, Nancy,' and each time I noticed an increasing shadow upon Aunt Nanny's brow, as if the intelligence distressed her. There was no clerk of the weather in those days to warn us beforehand when a cold wave was coming. Our weather-wise people gained all their lore from birds and animals, and natural signs, and the *Old Farmer's Almanac*. About nine o'clock Mr.

Jones came in and, after a coughing-fit explosion that frightened me out of my seven wits, announced, 'Ten below, Nancy,' and Aunt Nanny asked if I were not tired and should not like to go to bed. I gladly assented, and after having in vain tried with 'nods and becks and wreathed smiles' to signify to Mr. Jones my ardent desire to bid him good-night, I followed my kind hostess upstairs into the spare chamber, the aspect of which I shall never forget.

By this time I had realized the extreme severity of the 'cold snap' which had descended upon Newburyport, and had become chilled in merely passing through the entry and stairway. But when I stepped within those icy precincts a deeper chill struck to the marrow of my bones. I was a delicate child, and I now understood the little pucker of anxiety on Aunt Nanny's face as her father tolled the knell of increasing cold. The room was furnished with white painted furniture, the dimity drapery of windows and bed were white, the straw matting on the floor was white, while from the four windows, solid and sparkling with frost, but without shades, icy little drafts of air seemed to blow in upon us from all directions. A great wood fire blazed in the open fireplace, but it did not seem to make the least impression on the frosty air of the room, where every breath looked like a puff of smoke. The great white bed stood like a snowdrift, crowned with a thick white 'comforter' — or 'blessing,' as we called the 'down puff' of those days.

After I had hastily made my preparations for bed, Aunt Nanny brought in a shining brass warming pan, filled with glowing coals, which she moved swiftly up and down between the glossy-smooth, icy-cold sheets of the bed, leaving behind, beside the grateful warmth, a smell of just-going-to-be-scorched linen which is inseparable

from my memory of that old-time luxury. I was not used to a feather bed, and I thought I should never stop sinking into that soft nest of down, and after Aunt Nanny had administered a glass of hot wine whey, and covered me up to my eyes, I soon fell into a peaceful slumber, unconscious of Jack Frost or Jack Zero, being only once disturbed in the course of the night by a dim consciousness that Aunt Nanny was piling wood on the fire.

But in the morning I fully realized what a cold night I had passed through. The pail of water which was standing on my hearth had frozen solid during the night, and I gladly accepted Aunt Nanny's offer of dressing in her room where there was a stove, and where I could at least move my poor benumbed fingers. At breakfast Mr. Jones fired off several bombshells before announcing 'Twelve below, Nancy'; and after that meal was over, Aunt Nanny said to me with tears in her eyes that she could not bear to give up my visit, but she felt she could not make me comfortable in this extreme cold weather, and she would never forgive herself if I fell ill in consequence. So if I were willing, and the weather moderated, she proposed that I should take the noon stage back to Salem, and come again and finish my visit in warmer weather.

Now I was getting used even to nearly falling off my chair when the bombshells burst, and every day of a child's visit away from home is like a delightful exploring expedition, whether in arctic or tropic regions, so I was very much disappointed, though I had sense enough to understand Aunt Nanny's view, and to realize that under such conditions I must be a great care and anxiety to her. So I meekly acceded to her proposal, and tied up my bandbox, from which I had only unpacked the things necessary for the night, and in an hour or two's time was delivered into

the care of the stage driver, with a hot soapstone at my feet, and enveloped from head to foot, like a mummy, in an immense blanket shawl of Aunt Nanny's. Mr. Jones 'discharged his farewell shot' at the stage door, and as I leaned forward to bid him good-bye the last words I heard were 'What did the little lady say, Nancy?'

I confess that in spite of my disappointment I was glad to get home and cuddle down before the blazing grate in our delightfully warm parlor, and to rehearse the queer scenes of the night before to my sympathetic family, but whatever the pleasures of a visit to Aunt Nanny in warm weather may have been I was never to know. The old gentleman's cough, or the 'Fifteen below, Nancy,' or the excitement of my visit, or all three combined, proved too much for him, and soon after he died, and the home was broken up, and I was left with only this one arctic experience of Aunt Nanny's spare chamber.

IV

I wish I could give an adequate idea of the aspect of Salem seventy years ago, when the old town was besieged by an old-fashioned snowstorm. I do not mean one of the roaring, blustering kind, when, 'announced by all the trumpets of the sky,' and accompanied by howling gales and rushing clouds of snow, the storm came down upon us with sudden violence. We had that variety also, but this was a slow, silent, and more insidious foe. Not violent, but industrious and persistent beyond expression. Perhaps at nightfall a few scattering flakes would come slowly floating down, which would gradually increase in number until the air seemed solid with the fleecy whiteness. There was no wind with these storms. It was just the 'soft falling snow' of the old hymn, gently and noiselessly piling itself up on a dead level, and burying

streets and fences and houses and gardens in its dainty white shroud.

And to what a dazzling white world we waked up the next morning! Sometimes the snow would cover the parlor windows, so darkening the lower story of the house that we had to have lamps on the breakfast table, an excitement almost equaled by the announcement that there would be no rolls or milk for breakfast, as no horse could break through the streets piled high with drifts. The sense of isolation and of being utterly shut off from the world, or at least that part of the world which brought bread and milk, was very impressive, and the soft silvery walls which enclosed us gave a fairy-tale touch to the situation, as if we were under a spell, in an enchanted castle, and no child could tell what wonderful thing might happen next. The solemn white silence which brooded over everything added to this impression of strangeness. No sound was heard but the swish-swish of my father's shovel, as he worked away to make a passage out of our snowbound home, and I remember our delight when the sound of the first sleighbell showed that we were being brought once more into 'humanity's reach.'

I remember one storm when the snow was piled as high as a man's head between the sidewalks and the narrow passage for sleighs left in the middle of the street, and in one place an arch was cut in a great drift as the easiest way to get through it. There were no labor-saving appliances in those days for removing the snow from roofs and houses, no city carts to clear the streets (indeed, there was no city then), and the Celtic hordes had not yet invaded our shores armed with pick and shovel. Everything was done by the hard work of hand of our citizens, to whom these storms were a terror, and who rejoiced when the inevitable sun came to their aid and melted our arches

and snow forts, and when all the 'frolic architecture of the snow' vanished before his beams. And indeed the sun was a mighty helper in those days — better than a crowd of Irishmen. I remember once seeing a shining silver fringe of icicles, depending from the eaves of a neighbor's house, gradually disappear as the sunlight touched them. I remember too the musical little tinkling they made, like a chime of bells, when a light breeze moved them against each other, gradually ceasing as one by one they melted and fell with a little crash upon the snow below.

I wish I could make a picture for you of a Sunday in Salem seventy years ago. In the first place, the stillness of a Sunday then was different; a kind of solemn hush seemed to brood over the whole town, and a special depth of serenity marked the day. No carriages passed, and footsteps echoed far and long down the street. The Saturday-night bath, at that time universal, had brought a certain feeling of pious purification into every family, preparatory to the sacred rites of the next day, and the fresh clothes *all through* brought to every child's mind a delightful sense of something different and apart from all other days. Apropos of that bath, there is still in the cellar of a house in Salem a large white marble bathtub, finished with handsome mouldings and carvings, imported from Italy seventy or eighty years ago by one of our wealthy merchants. Near it stood a stove and boiler, and every Saturday night the boiler was filled and water heated, and one by one the children were brought down to the cellar for their bath. Of course it is useless for that purpose now; the present owner of the house often plans to transport it to garden or lawn for outside decoration, but so far has found it too huge and heavy to be moved from its place in the cellar, and I am afraid that even if the resources of science could transplant it

to the upper world he would find it somewhat of a 'white elephant.'

But to return to our Sunday. When the first bell rang, we were all clothed in our best, and when the second bell began to toll the small procession started for church. First came my father and mother, arm in arm, with sober Sunday faces, walking slowly in subdued fashion, while we children paced demurely behind them, with our spirits and feet quieted by the sense of the solemn atmosphere of the day. Arrived at the meetinghouse, which was the old North Church in North Street, we filed down the broad aisle with due decorum into our large square pew, and took our several places. I, being the youngest, always sat with my back to the minister, for which I was not sorry, as to a child's eye Dr. Brazer was not beautiful to behold, and my position gave me a fine view of all the entering congregation; and being, as I have said, an imaginative child, I passed the tedious hours of the long sermon from Firstly to Tenthly in inventing stories about the people who surrounded us.

Just opposite our pew was that of Judge Putnam, and greatly would his goodly array of handsome sons and beautiful daughters have been astonished if they had known the romances woven about their lives by the little sallow dark-eyed girl gazing at them from the pew on the other side of the aisle. Two square pews had been thrown into one, thus making quite a small room for the accommodation of the Putnam family, in the middle of which sat the handsome Judge in a large armchair, making a charming picture with his fair sweet-looking wife at his side and his beautiful daughters grouped around him. Then with what admiration I watched the slow stately progress of Miss Eliza Endicott, the then belle of Salem, as she sailed along the aisle with majestic grace until at last she entered her pew in the centre of

the church, bowing, with a solemn graciousness befitting the day, to her neighbors on either side. She wore on her head what was called in those days a 'Navarino' bonnet, with green bows half a yard high, while a frilled pelerine cape with long ends floated from her sloping shoulders, and I wondered if it could ever be written in my book of fate that I should sometime be a stately lady and wear a Navarino bonnet and frilled pelerine!

But when the little feet grew restless, and the neighbors had ceased to interest, and the small head began to droop, then my father would slip into my hand a bit of dried flagroot or of pipestem peppermint, or, better still, my mother would produce from her pocket a rose or cinnamon lozenge (always called 'lozenger'), which for a time occupied my attention and helped me to hold out until the final prayer was prayed, and 'Lord dismiss us' was sung, and, the long benediction over, my father unbuttoned the pew door, and we children gladly escaped from our cramped position into the freedom of the aisle, though even then we never forgot the decorum due to the place and the day. But I think that the society with the long name, if there had been such a thing in those days, would have sometimes interfered in behalf of the children because of the tediousness of those old-time services. The congregation always stood up during the prayers, and I remember a minister who always ended his prayers with the same long formula beginning 'Hear us, we beseech thee, O our God and Father,' and as soon as that blessed 'Hear us' sounded in the ears of the long-suffering listeners a joyful anticipatory rustle was heard through the meetinghouse, and almost before the final Amen was reached the wearied men, women, and children subsided into their places with sighs of relief. There were always two prayers in every service, a long and a short one,

and the short one was much longer than any prayer offered in the churches of to-day.

V

There is still to be seen in the cupola of the house in which Elias Hasket Derby lived, on Washington Street, a deep notch cut in the blind of the window looking out to sea. There this prince of the merchant princes of Salem used to rest his spyglass as he watched for his richly laden argosies from India to come sailing up the harbor. High buildings now shut out the view of the sea, but in those early days he could look straight down over the roofs of the low houses to Derby Street and to Derby Wharf, where his fleet of vessels were always either preparing for sea or arriving from distant ports, or far down the bay to Baker's Island and the Miseries, to catch the first gleam of a returning sail. I have often wondered what he would think now if he could see his deserted wharf, and the desolate quiet of the busy street which bears his name and which was the centre of his kingdom in the old days.

I came across a verse of Longfellow's the other day, which exactly expresses my feeling and my memory of this part of Salem:—

I remember the black wharves and the slips,
And the sea-tides tossing free;
And the Spanish sailors with bearded lips,
And the beauty and mystery of the ships,
And the magic of the sea.

When Lucy and I were children, Derby Street was one of our favorite haunts. We loved to linger round the great storehouses and to peep in at the open doors, and although even then the glory of Salem commerce had begun to wane, there was enough of the Eastern glamour hanging about the old wharves to make them enchanting places to children. They made the *Arabian Nights* real to us, and told stories of the

time when, as Hawthorne says, 'India was a new region, to which only Salem knew the way.' I remember now the queer spicy indescribable Eastern smell that floated out from those huge warehouses, wherein were stored spoils from every country: pepper from Sumatra, coffee from Arabia, cinnamon, cloves, and nutmegs from the Spice Islands, ivory and dates from Africa, sugar and molasses from the West Indies, wine from Madeira, figs and raisins from Spain. And happy children were we when some old salt, sitting in the doorway, would give us bits of rock candy, or a handful of gum arabic, or pieces of gum copal, doubly happy if a fly chanced to be imprisoned in its clear amber.

My friend and I used also to gaze with awe at an old building in the upper part of Essex Street, which was said to be filled with salt stored there by a merchant who, having paid a large price for his cargo, found no market for it on its arrival, and, not being willing to sacrifice it, kept it there for long years, gathering dust and losing its savor, while waiting for a purchaser. We used to put long pins and sticks into the cracks, and were much pleased when we succeeded in getting out a few shining white crystals. Once I discovered a knothole in one of the boards on one side of the shed, and great was our glee at the treasure extracted therefrom with much labor and difficulty.

I remember that day at dinner my mother said, 'Kiddy, what is that gray powder you are shaking out of a piece of newspaper over your meat? It does not look very appetizing. Why don't you use salt?'

I made some evasive answer, but I thought that no common salt, taken from a saltcellar, would ever have the charm or the savor of the 'gray powder' which had a history, and was the captive of my own stick and pin!

Truly, stolen goods are sweetest, and in this case saltiest.

When I began to write these memories of Old Salem, I intended to confine myself strictly to reminiscences of my own time, but insensibly I have been tempted to wander away into pleasant bypaths by the remembrance of stories I have heard in my youth, of the lives and characters of an older generation. Especially has this been so with regard to the splendid energy and enterprise of the race of merchants and seafaring men who made Salem so famous more than a hundred years ago. Everything was grist to their mill, and no obstacle was too great for them to overcome. Every day brought something new, and life was full of strange incidents and wonderful happenings.

In 1793 one of these wide-awake Salem sea captains, Captain Carnes, happening to call at the port of Ben-coolen on the south side of the Island of Sumatra, heard that pepper grew wild on the north coast of that island and could be gathered there by any visitor, and hey presto, he instantly set all sail for Salem with his news. I suppose it would be very inappropriate to say that he went 'hotfoot,' or that he did not let any 'grass grow under his feet,' but those old sayings just express the speed of his voyage home. And by the way, distances seemed nothing to those bold navigators. Their vessels were

entirely under their control, and they managed them as skillful horsemen their horses, with perfect ease and facility. It was nothing to Captain Carnes to run home to Salem from the Spice Islands to tell his wonderful story to one of our enterprising merchants, Jonathan Peele, who forthwith fitted out a vessel for the East and sent Captain Carnes back in command of her.

Nothing was heard from Carnes or his vessel for eighteen months; then one bright summer morning he triumphantly sailed up to his wharf, bringing the first cargo of pepper ever imported to this country. He had sailed directly for Sumatra, found his way at once to the happy pepper fields, where with his crew he worked for many long summer days in securing a full cargo of the spice, making a profit for the lucky owner of 700 per cent. Of course the secret of the Spice Islands could not long be hidden, and rival vessels tracked Carnes on his next voyage, but for many years Salem had the monopoly of trade with Sumatra and furnished a large part of the pepper of the world, that particular spice being largely the source of Salem's commercial success in after years — thanks to the prompt action and enterprising spirit of bold Captain Carnes.

(To be concluded)

FEAR NOT THE NIGHT

BY ROBERT NATHAN

Be not afraid because the sun goes down;
It brings the sunset and the plover's cry.
Before the colors of the evening drown,
The stars will make new colors in the sky.
Night is no enemy. She passes by,
And shows us silence for our own heart's good;
For while we sleep, the roses multiply,
The little tree grows taller in the wood.
Fear not the night; the morning follows soon.
Each has his task to make the earth more fair.
It is by these, by midnight and by noon,
That she grows riper and her orchards bear.
Her fields would wither in a sun too bright;
They need the darkness too. Fear not the night.

CRISIS IN RUSSIA: THE LONG VIEW

BY WICKHAM STEED

I

ON Sunday, June 13, Signor Mussolini gave his own answer, in the *Popolo d'Italia*, to the question which the whole world was asking about the significance of the trial and execution of eight Russian Generals a day or two before. 'Bolshevism,' he wrote, 'is passing through a mortal crisis, and the end cannot be far off. An army where the Chiefs are shot, be they spies or innocent men, cannot last.'

On the same day a leading weekly journal in London drew a parallel between the case of Stalin and that of the Roman Emperor Tiberius in his closing years. It observed that after Tiberius had detected and suppressed the conspiracy of his most trusted minister, Seianus (the commander of his personal bodyguard), he became psychopathically nervous for his own safety. Unable to rely on anyone, he put his faith in frequent executions. Nobody in high place was secure. To be informed against was to be tried; to be tried was to die. Ever since he suppressed the conspiracy (if there was one) of Zinoviev and Kamenev, this journal went on, and probably before that, since the murder of his close partisan Kirov, it may be that Stalin has felt and acted like Tiberius. His situation presents many parallels; he took over the Soviet headship from its founder, Lenin, as Tiberius took over the Roman imperial dignity from its founder Augustus; and in neither in-

stance could the successor enjoy the founder's undisputed position.

These are only two among many explanations of what has gone on in Soviet Russia. Both may be inadequate. If Stalin is, as some reports suggest, a very sick man, if he is 'psychopathically nervous' for his own safety, as the Emperor Tiberius was, Russian Bolshevism is passing through a severe crisis which may or may not be 'mortal.' Bolshevism is the oldest of the revolutionary dictatorial systems which have changed the political texture of modern Europe. Dictatorships are never eternal, and the Russian dictatorship may be the first to decay. Yet to me it seems that before trying to pass judgment upon the Russian crisis the nature of the circumstances amid and out of which it has developed needs to be dispassionately considered.

Glancing back at the origins of the Marxist Communism which was at first the soul of Bolshevism, one is struck by the curious play of historical cause and effect. In the later decades of the eighteenth and the earlier decades of the nineteenth centuries various mechanical inventions altered the methods of industrial production and laid the foundations of what was presently to be called 'capitalist industry.' Old, semifeudal relationships between master and man were replaced by the 'cold cash nexus' which Marx and Engels were presently to denounce in their

Communist Manifesto of 1848. Adam Smith extolled the new economic freedom, and saw only light in its division of labor and unfettered competition. Karl Marx, who observed the less attractive features of this freedom, saw only its darker sides, and upon them based his Communist doctrine. These things are well known. But it is not often realized that capitalist industry in Great Britain was able to develop unchecked, with a minimum of respect for the value of the human lives which it employed and exploited, because England was engaged in a life-and-death struggle with Napoleonic France, and because her ruling classes were in no mood, when that exhausting ordeal had ended at Waterloo, to pay much heed to social problems.

In his recent *History of Europe* a distinguished British historian, Mr. H. A. L. Fisher, formerly Minister of Education, draws attention to this circumstance. 'While the Government of England was struggling for its life with revolutionary and Napoleonic France,' he writes, 'and the governing classes were stricken with the fear of revolutionary danger at home, it was vain to expect that the needs of the new, unknown, half-barbarous industrial population . . . would be sympathetically considered. Even William Pitt, who at one moment showed a real flash of interest and comprehension, recoiled from the task of alleviating the lot of the wage-earning population.' And Burke, whose flaming imagination embraced the Indian and the American scene, and the vast significance of the French Revolution, had no eyes for the urgent domestic problems of the Industrial Revolution in England — the sweated labor of women and small children, the shameful housing, the disparity between wages and profits, the uncertainty and insecurity of employment. It was not until the forties of the nineteenth century that the evils

proceeding from this rapid and soulless industrialization were brought home to the conscience of the nation.

Meanwhile those evils had inspired the thoughts which Marx and Engels expressed in their *Communist Manifesto*, thoughts that were to become the gospel of Bolshevism in Russia from 1917 onwards. As Trotsky has truthfully said, 'The whole of Marx is in the *Communist Manifesto*'; for what Marx wrote later in *Das Kapital* was an amplification of this fundamental treatise. And one of the most remarkable things about Russian Communism appears to me the comparative success that has attended the adaptations to a mainly peasant people, politically inexperienced, of economic theories based upon the defects of an immature industrial capitalism in a totally different country.

II

As Lenin was to discover, the full rigor of Marxist doctrine could not be applied to Russian conditions. Hence Lenin's 'New Economic Policy,' known as the 'Nep,' after the collapse of pure Communism in 1921. But Lenin never abandoned the idea of the proletarian world-revolution, which was likewise the breath of Trotsky's nostrils. Orthodox Marxism, or Bolshevism, clings to belief in the necessity of proletarian revolution everywhere as the only means of assuring the safety of proletarian revolution anywhere. In the words of the *Communist Manifesto*: —

Common action by the various proletariats in civilized countries is one of the first conditions for their emancipation. And when the antagonism of classes within nations shall have disappeared, the hostility of one nation toward another will likewise disappear. Communism is working for union and understanding between the democratic parties of all countries. Its aims cannot be attained without the violent overthrow of the existing social order. Proletarians have nothing but their chains

to lose. They have a whole world to gain. Proletarians of all lands, unite!

Soon after Joseph 'Stalin,' a Georgian revolutionary of many names, had succeeded Lenin in the leadership of Soviet Russia, a different Communist method began to appear. There were 'Five-Year Plans' and collective farming. A hard, determined 'Man of Steel,' as Lenin nicknamed him, the new leader was not given to flights of political imagination. Trotsky's notions of permanent world-revolution attracted him not at all; and the suggestion that Soviet Russia should spend her strength and her resources in missionary work for a proletarian overthrow of capitalist society everywhere struck him as fantastic. Let Soviet Russia make a success of Bolshevism at home, let her create a model Communist or even Socialist State, and the rest of the world would be moved to follow her example. Meanwhile the world-revolution would have to wait. To build up the Russian Revolution on sure foundations was task enough.

Trotsky, the creator of the Red Army, disagreed and had to go into exile. Many other prominent Bolsheviks also disagreed, and opposed Stalin secretly or openly. Reprimanded, punished, pardoned, and finally arrested, tried, and executed, they met a fate even less happy than that of Trotsky. How far were Kamenev, Zinoviev, and others who made abject confession of their guilt in August 1936, or Sokolnikov, Radek, and the fifteen who likewise confessed and were condemned in the Moscow trial of last January, really 'guilty' of the treason ascribed to and admitted by them? This question is as hard to answer as a similar question would be upon the alleged and hitherto unpublished confessions of the eight Generals who were shot last June.

'Wrecking' or sabotage there certainly has been. One consideration

which, unless I err, has not yet been urged in public was put before me some months ago by an eminent German scientist and technician who was given an important post in Russia when his Jewish antecedents compelled him to give up work in Hitlerite Germany. A number of well-equipped laboratories were placed at his disposal, with a competent staff of Russian research workers. He was also in a position to know how German was being taught in the Soviet schools, which specialized in the study of foreign languages. At first he was delighted with the way his staff worked. Experiments were intelligently conducted. He began to be troubled when he found that none of them ever led to a tangible conclusion. Casting about for an explanation, and making cautious inquiries, he discovered that the inconclusiveness of the work done was simply a form of sabotage, of 'wrecking'; and that this form was, in its turn, a kind of silent opposition to the Stalin system. It was, indeed, the only form which opposition could safely take.

In the linguistic schools where German was being taught he detected the same spirit. The work was going on, but results were insignificant. In the teaching of German, for instance, the professors would spend a whole year in imparting to their pupils exact knowledge of one or two of the more complicated rules of German grammar, while carefully abstaining from any attempt to teach the simpler rules or the language itself. Comprehensive ignorance of German among the pupils was the natural consequence.

When I asked this eminent German — who ended by throwing up his job in disgust — whether this 'wrecking' was due to Trotskyite leanings, he felt unable to answer. It might or might not be, he said, but he was disposed to set it down rather to a spirit of clandestine opposition, to an almost unconscious

and unconfessed yearning for some degree of individual freedom, coupled with a desire to outwit the authorities in ways which they could neither control nor discover.

Whether the experience of this German was typical I cannot say. He may have lived and worked in disaffected centres; and he did not question the fact that remarkable results had been achieved in the collective farms and in aircraft, tank, and tractor factories. He spoke only of his own experience. In other respects he confirmed the description of Russian Communist society which I had received a little earlier from another non-Russian observer. It ran:—

Every Russian under the age of thirty, man, woman, and child, is convinced (and was convinced even when they were waiting in long queues for a piece of black bread) that they are living in a Communist paradise, and the rest of the world in a capitalist hell. They do not now want to go out and compel the rest of the world to come into their Communist paradise; but if the demons from the capitalist hell try to break in, then Europe may see something on a very much bigger scale though not unlike the rush of the Napoleonic armies over Europe, carrying the ideals of the French Revolution early in the nineteenth century.

My German informant added: 'I should put the "frontier" between the two Russias higher than the age of thirty. I think it is nearer forty. Remember that a Communist mother, aged thirty-five to-day, was herself little more than a child when the Revolution came in 1917, and that all her impressions have been derived from Soviet schools, institutes, and propaganda. She has no pre-Communist background. Only Russians above forty have anything like a pre-Communist background or standard of comparison; and for those of them whose sympathies were "white," or anti-Communist, life has not been easy. Their numbers have diminished rapidly

and are still decreasing. There is no communication between their Russia and the Russia of Stalin. The "frontier" is an impassable barrier.'

It ought to follow, though it may not follow in practice, that the Communist generations below the age of forty will be incapable of reacting spontaneously against any official versions of events which may reach them through the omnipresent radio, the Soviet press, or party councils. This is perhaps true of the youngest generation whose minds have been entirely formed under Stalin. It is perhaps not true of the older Communist generations which received the pure milk of the Marxist word and were taught to believe in world-revolution before Stalin took over. One would imagine that it must come as a shock to a majority of Russian Communists when they hear that respected veterans of the Revolution, the creators of the Communist paradise, were no better than rogues and traitors who deserved the dog's death they have suffered, or that valiant commanders of the Red Army like Marshal Tukhachevsky, or Generals as distinguished as Yakir and Putna, had been secretly in the service of Nazi Germany. However oddly Russian Communist minds may work, it would seem that there must be limits to their versatility in unquestioning belief.

III

Yet at this point an element of doubt creeps in. Is there no truth in the charges that the partisans of Trotsky, and even eminent commanders of the Red Army, have been in touch with the secret agents of Nazi Germany? Before looking at such evidence as the published official reports of the court proceedings against the alleged traitors may offer, it will be well to examine what I may call a theory of

probability. I know well that likelihood is not proof, and that in many a Western court of law the truth, as finally established, would have seemed highly improbable if it had been put forward as a hypothesis. Still, in the theory of probability which I shall now outline, there are elements which I know to be sound, though I may not think it fair to the memory of dead men to mention names and places.

My theory falls into at least three parts. The first part is a mixture of fact and conjecture. It is a fact that Trotsky and his sympathizers look upon Stalin as an apostate from the true Marxist creed of world-wide proletarian revolution. It is a further fact that Trotsky, the apostle of this true faith, lives in exile uncomforted by any feeling that his fate is just; and he may even be animated by vindictive passion. It is a fact that he has, or had, many secret sympathizers among Communists in Soviet Russia, and open sympathizers elsewhere. It is also a fact, albeit a fact not yet publicly attested, that in many Communist circles the view has prevailed that Stalin's successor would be chosen among the partisans of Trotsky. To them the future might belong.

These are a few preliminary facts. What follows is conjecture. It may fairly be assumed that Stalin was aware of the facts, and knew that he, and his comparatively successful apostasy, were menaced. It may also be assumed that his secret police, the OGPU, were kept busy collecting information and supplying it to him. And it is reasonably certain that, like the Oriental he is, he will not have struck at his secret opponents until he felt sure of his power to crush them, and to remove possible rivals, by a series of smashing blows. He will have wished to do this in such a way as to secure the approval of the great majority of Communist Russians by making it appear that he

was the stalwart defender of their paradise against traitors in league with capitalist devils.

The second part of my theory concerns the foreign enemies of Russian Bolshevism, chief among them Germany and Japan. Long before the signing of the Germano-Japanese Treaty against the Communist International, or Comintern, on November 27, 1936, there had been close coöperation between Berlin and Tokyo, so that, in the event of war, Russia might be compelled to fight on two fronts. It is probable that the secret services of Germany and Japan were already co-ordinating their efforts, and that the obligation which the two High Contracting Parties undertook, in the Additional Protocol to their treaty, was simply a formal recognition of existing arrangements. In this Protocol, Germany and Japan engaged themselves to 'exchange information upon the activities of the Communist International, and also to take investigatory and defensive measures against the Communist International.' What will have been the nature of these 'investigatory and defensive measures'? They will doubtless have included some contact with the disaffected Communist, or Trotskyite, centres in Russia and abroad, since those centres will have possessed information not easily obtainable by others. A further probability, amounting almost to a fact, is that the German secret agents, at any rate, will have been men formerly affiliated to the Communist Party in Germany and taken over by the German Secret State Police, or Gestapo, as so many former Communists were. It would have been quite useless to send ordinary Prussian police officers, ignorant of the Communist jargon and of Marxist ways of reasoning, to maintain contact with and to win the confidence of even the anti-Stalin Communists.

Moreover, there were precedents for this sort of thing. During the World War, German agents kept in touch with Lenin and his fellows in Switzerland; and it was on the recommendation of a distinguished metaphysician, then in the German diplomatic service, that arrangements were made early in 1917 to send Lenin back to Russia. This diplomatist understood that a dose of revolutionary Communism was the very thing needed to cause an explosion in Russia after the constitutional revolution of March 1917. So Lenin was fetched from Switzerland, transported through Germany in closed railway carriages, and Trotsky was enabled to come back from the United States. As a result, the Russian front exploded. Even before Lenin's return the Russian Communists had issued to the army their famous *prikaz*, or order, No. 1. It called upon soldiers to disobey their officers and to take charge of arms and internal administration. After Lenin's return, the Russian front against Germany was kept in being with the greatest difficulty; and early in March 1918, when Lenin's authority had been fully established, Trotsky presided over the peace negotiations at Brest-Litovsk which ended by the cession of huge areas of Russian territory to the Germans.

This territory was not ceded out of love for Germany. According to Lenin's ideas, if not those of Trotsky, it mattered little who might take the territory. They were going to start a Communist world-revolution which would overthrow all 'imperialist' governments and bring the proletariats of the world together. The Germans thought otherwise. They looked upon the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk as a lasting settlement which, so soon as the great German offensive should have succeeded in the West after its beginning on March 21, 1918, would enable Germany to develop the Ukraine and

other rich regions of European Russia as a German colony in Europe. In conjunction with the Treaty of Bucharest, which gave Germany control of Rumanian wheat, oil, and timber, this would establish German mastery over Central and Eastern Europe on firm foundations. The Russian Bolsheviks might then do their worst — and be thankful if Germany should continue to tolerate their existence.

These German plans went awry. The great offensive in the West failed. The Peace Treaties of Versailles, Saint-Germain, and Trianon radically altered the map of Europe to Germany's disadvantage. The Treaties of Brest-Litovsk and of Bucharest were obliterated. But Germany has never forgotten them; and it is interesting to reflect that Herr Hitler's Note to Great Britain of March 31, 1936, is, in reality, based on the assumption that the Treaties of Brest-Litovsk and Bucharest are alone valid. His Note rejected the Locarno Pact as being an emanation of the Treaty of Versailles. It rejected also the Treaty of Versailles because it did not observe all the conditions of the Armistice; and it repudiated the Armistice because its provisions were not fully respected in the Versailles Treaty. In fact, Hitler's Note of March 31, 1936, was a pre-Armistice Note — that is the Note of a Power still belligerent and at peace only with Soviet Russia and Rumania in virtue of the Treaties of Brest-Litovsk and of Bucharest.

IV

It is well to bear this circumstance in mind when the plausibility of the charges against a former Soviet Ambassador like Sokolnikov and an important Bolshevik like Radek are being considered. One can imagine the shrewd men in the German secret police getting into touch with Trotsky,

or Trotsky's friends, and seeking to persuade them that, if Stalin and Marshal Voroshilov could be got rid of, Trotsky would come back, and that with Trotsky it would be easy to make a Russo-German agreement. Nazi Germany may have thought that what Trotsky and his friends had done once for Imperial Germany at Brest-Litovsk they might do again; and that German 'colonial' ambitions in Europe could be satisfied without the cost and the losses of another war.

If this conjecture were baseless, it would be harder to account for the violent outbursts against Russia in which Hitler and Goebbels indulged at the Nazi Party rally in Nuremberg last September. Hitler was not always anti-Bolshevist. One of his first acts as Chancellor and Leader was to renew the Russo-German Treaty of Rapallo of April 1922 and to prolong the understanding between the German Reichswehr and the Russian Red Army. Only after the Polono-German agreement of January 1934 did his bearing change; and it is an uncontradicted fact that among the secret features of that agreement was an understanding that Poland would facilitate the detachment of the Ukraine from Russia in the interests of Germany. If German agents were really working with the anti-Stalin Communist elements in Russia and abroad, to get rid of Stalin and bring about a situation in Russia which would facilitate the accomplishment of German designs, there is some sense in the outbursts of rage at Nuremberg in September after the trial of Kamenev and Zinoviev at Moscow in August had upset the German-Trotskyite plan. The bigger trial of Radek, Sokolnikov, and others in January of this year also becomes comprehensible.

By way of illustration, let me summarize the evidence of Sokolnikov as given on pages 151-156 of the verbatim report of the January trial.

SOKOLNIKOV: Allow me to revert to the conversation with Radek. . . . During this conversation we spoke of the changes that had taken place. We said that while in 1933 and 1934 the principal military menace to the Soviet Union lay in the Far East, the military menace the most serious was offered by Germany in 1935. . . . Pyatakov [one of the accused] told me that Trotsky had been negotiating with Hess [Rudolf Hess, Hitler's deputy]. In these negotiations Hess was empowered to put forward demands which concerned not only German interests but also the interests of another country [Japan?]. Pyatakov told me that he had understood Trotsky to say that these were negotiations on a number of questions and that agreement had been reached on them. Of course it was assumed that this draft agreement . . . would not remain an agreement between these two persons.

That is to say, the first alternative was designed for the contingency of power passing into the hands of the [anti-Stalin] bloc irrespective of anything arising before the outbreak of a war. To put it plainly, in such an event the other side undertook to give the government of the bloc its friendly support. As regards the bloc, it undertook a number of obligations of an economic character which secured economic advantages to the other side. The second alternative envisaged that the bloc would come to power as a result of a war and as a result of a defeat of the Soviet Union. In this event the parties to the agreement pledged themselves to establish relations with the government of the bloc, thus, strictly speaking, I think, ensuring their advent to power, and hence withholding support from rival groups. The bloc undertook to conclude peace immediately and recognize territorial concessions.

In this agreement they [the territorial concessions] were stated as follows: that Japan, in the event of her taking part in the war, would receive territorial concessions in the Amur region and the maritime province of the Far East; as regards Germany, it was contemplated to 'satisfy the national interests of the Ukraine.' Beneath this transparent veil was understood the establishment of German control over the Ukraine coupled with the secession of the latter from the U. S. S. R. Moreover a

number of economic concessions were contemplated, going somewhat farther than the economic concessions of the first alternative. . . . We figured that we had certain chances [of retaining some independence]. Where did we see them? We saw them in the play of international contradictions. We considered that, let us say, complete sway in the Soviet Union could never be established by German Fascism because it would encounter the objections of other imperialist rivals, that certain international conflicts might occur, that we could rely on other forces which would not be interested in strengthening Fascism.

If this, with much other corroborative evidence, was entirely fabricated by Stalin and his helpers, the Moscow trials of August 1936 and January 1937 must stand as two of the most monstrous judicial outrages ever perpetrated. If, on the other hand, there was in the evidence any considerable substratum of truth, — as I am disposed to think there must have been, — Stalin's behavior, though ruthless, and ill-advised as regards the effect upon public opinion outside Russia, becomes intelligible. I have reason to think that my view of the trials is shared by painstaking and conscientious British observers who know Soviet Russia well and whose names are respected throughout the English-speaking world as those of honest and sober-minded students of political and economic phenomena. To their considered (though hitherto unpublished) explanation of the psychology of this Communist 'treason' I shall return. For the present, and as the third part of my theory of probability, I wish to glance at the trial and execution of Marshal Tukhachevsky and seven other Generals last June.

When all allowances have been made for the rivalry of various groups in the Higher Command of the Russian Red Army, and for the possibility that one group may have managed so to play upon the fears of Stalin and of Marshal

Voroshilov as to bring about the downfall of the other group, there remains the question whether there was not, in this case also, the appearance of a substratum of truth in the charges brought against the executed officers. As I have said, I do not feel it would be fair to mention names or places. But what I know from facts personally observed and information received in the early part of 1936 — that is to say, six months before the trial of Kamenev and Zinoviev in August 1936 — convinces me that one at least of the incriminated and executed officers maintained close and friendly relations with German officers in a certain European capital, and that these Germans were in equally close touch with military and naval representatives of Japan.

I am not for a moment suggesting that these friendly relations amounted to any kind of 'treasonable commerce.' I am suggesting that, since echoes of the information which the Russian officer in question gave his German friends reached my ears in perfectly innocent fashion, echoes of the same information are likely to have found their way to official and military quarters in Berlin and Tokyo. It would then be enough, if any secret agent of the OGPU, or other representative of the Russian intelligence service in Berlin or Tokyo, got wind of the source of this information, for the Russian officer to become suspect and ultimately to be put on trial. In the atmosphere of suspicion and alarm which surrounded the Moscow trials of August 1936 and January 1937 this sort of thing, however harmless, might easily be magnified into the crime of treason.

V

What remains? Is Bolshevism, as Mussolini writes, 'passing through a mortal crisis' so that 'the end cannot be far off'? This would, in my view, be

a premature conclusion — a conclusion, moreover, which ought to give Mussolini and Hitler food for anxious thought. The Italian Fascist and the German Nazi systems have been built up ostensibly as the ramparts of the Italian and German social structures against the Bolshevik danger. The recorded fact that Mussolini himself never believed in the reality of a Bolshevik danger in Italy is not to the point. As he himself has put it, he climbed into power on the shoulders of those who did believe in the Bolshevik danger. More to the point is it that he and Hitler induced tens of millions of Italians and Germans, not to mention hundreds of millions elsewhere, to believe it. Fascism and Naziism have gained support in the world mainly by offering the multitudes who have something to lose a choice between two systems. One system, the Bolshevik, suppresses both private property and individual freedom. The other, the Nazi-Fascist, professes to respect private property, or capital, and only to suppress individual freedom as a means of saving those who forfeit their freedom from losing what property or capital they may have to lose. So multitudes, fearing for their pockets, have tacitly or explicitly acquiesced in the suppression of their individual liberties as being less bad than the loss of their property. But, if the end of Bolshevism is not far off, if the Bolshevik bugbear disappears and, with it, the ostensible threat to private property, can Mussolini and Hitler feel quite sure that their peoples will not begin to regret the loss of individual freedom and to demand that it be restored? If I were Mussolini or Hitler, I should pray that Bolshevism might continue to keep my frightened and libertyless dupes in the Fascist or Nazi fold.

But *is* Bolshevism nearing its end? Is Stalin really transforming it into a kind of Russian National Socialism?

Is he tolerating, if not encouraging, the formation in Russia of a new bourgeoisie, a new aristocracy, a new official hierarchy? If so, the days of Bolshevism (in its Marxist form) are certainly numbered. For reasons independent of any of the Moscow trials I think they may be numbered. If so, it will be because the economic theories of Marx are radically unsound, because his doctrine of 'surplus value' does not hold water, because the fallacious nature of the reasoning on which it is based invalidates the whole principle of 'the dictatorship of the proletariat,' and because his 'materialist interpretation of history' cannot stand against the superior truth that men and nations do not live by bread alone. Had Trotsky and the orthodox Marxists succeeded in regaining control of Russia, with or without German and Japanese help, they would merely have restored bloody chaos. If anything remains of Stalin and his system, after present storms and discontents shall have subsided, he may turn out to have builded better than he knew. I am not yet inclined to write 'Finis' beneath the annals of Soviet Russia, if only because the Soviet system in itself, and apart from its Marxist fallacies, corresponds too closely to the Russian national character.

Yet what are we to make of a system that seems to be going the way of revolutionary France, where one sect of fanatics decapitated the members of other sects until they themselves reached the guillotine in their turn? And here I revert to the views of those British students of Russia referred to above. They knew and liked Sokolnikov, though they thought him a mysterious person, a fanatical revolutionary, and a consummate conspirator. They also knew Radek well. They have read the evidence of the Moscow trials and feel no doubt that the prisoners were guilty. Their explanation is

that the behavior of these men is an effect of long-continued underground conspiracy to overthrow a Tsarist régime of absolute autocracy and cruel repression. Successive generations of Russian revolutionaries were hunted by the Tsar's police, were in constant peril of imprisonment, flogging, and death, and so were moulded to a particular pattern of behavior which ended by becoming a fixed character. Lies and aliases, deceit and trickery, theft and assassination, filled their whole lives. Not all of them were heroic. Some among them succumbed to the temptation of betraying their comrades and became Tsarist spies and *agents provocateurs*.

This 'pattern of behavior' had analogies in other revolutionary struggles. It was not unknown in Scotland and England during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The same pattern can be traced in Danton and Barras, Sieyès and Bonaparte, not to mention Talleyrand and Napoleon III. In Russia, which was, in 1900, on much the same level of morals and civilization as were England and France in 1700, this pattern of revolutionary behavior persists and is likely to persist. The Stalin group has now been on top for some time. Its opponents naturally employ the same revolutionary means they had used against the Tsarist Government. In 1932-1933, when the conspiracies against Stalin began to take shape, there were famine and crisis in Russia. The fate of the collective farms seemed to be trembling in the balance. It was only to be expected that those who thought Stalin's policy wrong and disastrous should take to underground conspiracy and should invoke the aid of hostile foreign government, just as the English and Scottish nobility, statesmen, and ministers of religion did, a couple of centuries ago, when they called in alternately the Dutch and the French.

How long this pattern of behavior will last none can say. It is likely to last as long as the generation whose early lives were spent in underground conspiracies against the Tsar. But if Soviet Communism, or Stalin's National Socialism, can succeed in solving the problem of poverty in the midst of plenty, and of gaining time for the new generations that have never known conspiracy to evolve a new type of Russian life, some degree of spontaneous stability may presently be attained. For the near future the prophecy which Lenin wrote to one of his followers in November 1922 holds good: 'For a long time to come there will be doubts, uncertainty, suspicion, and treachery.'

To this diagnosis and forecast I have little to add, for I do not know whether the Russian people will be left to work out their own salvation or whether Germany, in default of success in attempts to despoil them by agreement, may not try the adventure of despoiling them by force. To some extent the answer to this doubt may lie in the hands of Great Britain. In the recent past, British policy has not invariably been valiant, wide, or perspicacious. At times it has even seemed to be directed by faint-hearted and purblind muddlers. It has been accompanied — as Sir Norman Angell shows in his latest book, *The Defence of the Empire* — by a series of retreats from positions which former generations of British statesmen, with the approval of their people, would stoutly have defended. Even to-day it is not certain that British Ministers understand that the loud demand of Nazi Germany for a return of Imperial Germany's oversea colonies is in the nature of a bargaining card, or that this demand is unlikely to be pressed if Great Britain will close one eye while Nazi Germany carves out for herself a colonial empire nearer home at the expense of independent States in Central Europe and of Russia.

Great is the power of the pretense that Naziism defends the Western world against Bolshevism; and of this pretense Hitler is an arch-exploiter.

Things may be heading for an almighty smash. The principles of democracy, individual freedom, and responsible representative government may be doomed to go down before the onslaught of totalitarian, deified States

and their not less deified Leaders. Still, I have a notion that before this happens many millions of Britons will want to know the reason why it should happen; and that it need not happen at all if England speaks out in time and tells the world beforehand what she will do because the very laws of her existence must, in any event, make it impossible for her not to do it.

CRISIS IN RUSSIA: THE HUMAN EQUATION

BY WILLIAM RESWICK

I

On the tenth anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution the Soviet Premier Rykov, in an exclusive interview to the Associated Press, told this writer: —

‘Trotsky is haunted by fears of Thermidor. He has warned us of the imminent danger of Bonapartism. Now I think Trotsky is wrong. History is not a perpetual recurrence of events. Our revolution does not exactly parallel the French, if for the simple reason that we were not content with mere political change. We had cast life in a new mould. The Soviet State is to-day in full command of its social and economic heights. Only alarmists can seriously entertain fears of a Bonapartist danger in our country.’

But as the twentieth anniversary approaches, Rykov is a prisoner, awaiting trial for counter-revolution, while most of his old colleagues have already faced a Red firing squad. As things have turned out, Trotsky had good cause to be alarmed.

The first alarmist to come my way on the day of that interview was none

other than the Soviet censor. The Stalin-Trotsky fight was on. It was fast approaching a crisis. One glance at Rykov’s reference to Trotsky, and I was given the choice: ‘Have it blue-penciled or wait for approval by superiors.’ I took solace in the old adage of half a loaf being better than none at all, and watched the censor apply the blue with a generous hand. But when it was all over, Rykov’s entire negation of Trotsky’s theory of Thermidor vanished into thin air. What was left of the text I cabled to New York.

Within a few weeks following my talk with the Soviet Premier, I was to hear Trotsky speak at the open grave of his friend, the Soviet diplomat and scholar, Adolph Joffe, who had committed suicide. It was by far the most precarious moment in Stalin’s entire career. The air over Novy Devichy Monastir, the cemetery, was surcharged with anti-Stalinist defiance. It is the only time in all of my years in Moscow that I heard openly the protest,

'Doloi Stalina! — Down with Stalin!' The big cemetery was surrounded by heavily armed OGPU troops. One felt the tension in the air. But the resentment smoldered; it did not burst into flame.

Two months later Trotsky was an exile in Alma Ata, and his cohorts were scattered over the frozen Siberian wastes. Trotsky's fall was followed shortly after by the eclipse of Kamenev, Zinoviev, Radek, Rakovsky, Sokolnikov, and all the other leaders of the Left opposition.

The liquidation of the Leftist heresy accomplished, Stalin turned to the Right. One by one he challenged every eminent member of the highest Bolshevik Sanctum — the Politbureau. First came Rykov, Lenin's successor as head of the Soviet Government, then Tomsky, leader of Soviet labor, and finally Bukharin, the greatest Marxist scholar after Lenin.

The Kremlin, and with it all Russia, became the scene of a titanic struggle. It was more than a fight for one-man rule. Great principles were at stake.

II

The Stalin-Trotsky fight was in progress while Lenin still lay on his deathbed, but until the end of 1923 it went on behind the scenes. At the time of Lenin's funeral in February 1924, three conflicting theories were contending within the party councils in the Kremlin. They were Trotsky's aggressive internationalism aimed at promoting the world revolution; the Rykov-Bukharin-Tomsky philosophy of slow evolution with wide concessions to capitalism; and Stalin's theory of building up socialism in Russia to the exclusion of all else.

Stalin won simply because, as Secretary-General of the Communist Party, he had made free use of a device familiar in our everyday politics, but

unthinkable in the Russia of Lenin's time. During the two years preceding Lenin's death, Stalin had built a powerful political machine. The day of Lenin's passing found Stalin's men in key positions in the Communist Party, in Soviet industry, in the OGPU, and in Trotsky's Red Army. And to top it all, the Soviet espionage system, at Stalin's disposal, enjoyed a vested discretionary right to take human liberty and life — a right used so extensively as to keep the whole country in a mental state of perpetual and unmitigated fear.

But as the struggle for power developed, there appeared to be some evidence of the soundness of Rykov's prophecy. Unlike the French, the Bolshevik upheaval did not, in those days at least, devour its children. While stark terror reigned below, it zealously spared life in the upper spheres. Between Stalin and his chief adversaries the fight was one of a political and theoretical nature. It went on for years, but always within the confines of discussion — dismissal from high rank, expulsion from the Party, exile of the more recalcitrant; then their recantations, which invariably resulted in pardons, restoration of civil rights, and in some cases even a return to positions of prestige. Radek, Sokolnikov, and, to a lesser degree, Kamenev and Zinoviev, had been beneficiaries of this order.

In certain Soviet circles there was a tendency to admire Stalin for magnanimity to his adversaries. It was freely rumored in those days that the dictator's generosity was the result of a deathbed promise to Lenin under all circumstances to spare the lives of the founders of Bolshevism.

With the emasculation of all opposition, Stalin rose to heights of power never dreamed of by any Tsar. As undisputed master of the world's potentially richest country, he embarked

upon the five-year plans to transform Russia into a modern industrial state. The scope, the errors, and the achievements of that vast campaign need not concern us here. By the spring of 1934 he seemed to be approaching his objective. That year the Soviet industries had shown steady improvement and the collective farms had yielded sufficient grain to assure the populace a minimum supply of bread. Yet it was at this very moment, the first breathing spell in years, that the Red Army once again focused the country's attention. There were reasons for this, as Mr. Wickham Steed has indicated. To the west, German Naziism had assumed the proportions of an imminent menace. Japan threatened in the Far East. From a bitter enemy of the League of Nations, the Kremlin was compelled to become its staunchest friend. Along with the slogan of a united front against war and Fascism came the signing of a military Franco-Soviet pact.

The process of mechanizing and modernizing the army began in 1930, simultaneously with the inauguration of the first five-year plan. But the militarization on a vast scale took place in the spring of 1933 — shortly after Hitler came into power. Thereafter it was a steady, unrelenting process. The second five-year plan aimed at strengthening Russia's defensive and offensive weapons. By the end of 1934, the regular standing Red Army had reached a total of 940,000. A year later the figure had risen to 1,300,000, exclusive of Russia's vast reserves. It was during this period of vast militarization that the Cossacks were restored to their ancient Tsaristic privileges. In 1935 the special army of the OGPU was suddenly placed under control of the War Office. Simultaneously the Soviet industries — heavy and light — concentrated chiefly on strengthening the striking power of the Red fighting force. The Soviet war budget for that

year reached an all-time high of 5,000,000,000 rubles. Dominating this gigantic effort one saw a formidable figure, War Commissar Klementy Efremovich Voroshilov.

III

I first met Voroshilov in the most tragic hour of the Bolshevik Revolution. Lenin's body lay on the wooden structure that was to give way years later to the red marble mausoleum. The troops had marched by with muffled drum and crape-hung, lowered banners. They were followed by the proletarian columns. It was thirty degrees below zero. I told one of Chicherin's secretaries standing alongside that I was freezing fast. He led the way to a huge log fire built under the Kremlin wall. Red commanders came here to warm up. The secretary did the introducing. I heard the words 'Commandarm Voroshilov' and was thrilled. So many people had spoken to me of the brave officer. His was a reputation of a classic Chapaiev, of a daring Red warrior who had been equal to any emergency in the civil war. There he stood, handsome, with a cleft, frost-covered chin, with laughing eyes, an athletic wiry man, breathing energy and great strength.

Voroshilov did the talking. The rest listened. It was reasonable to assume that Lenin would at that moment be the topic of conversation, but the officers, particularly Voroshilov, talked shop. He had recently read some book on Napoleonic strategy and appeared altogether captivated by the subject. This talk went on until the very moment when the Kremlin batteries roared their parting salute.

Less than two years later Voroshilov was appointed Commissar of War. From that time on, two of the most trusted and influential aides flanking Stalin were the head of the Red Army and Yagoda, the chief of the OGPU. As

between the two, Voroshilov eventually became the more powerful. In 1934 Muscovites in the 'know' had frequently referred to him as a likely successor to Stalin.

Voroshilov came to be regarded as the most outspoken champion of the Red nationalistic movement. To him popular rumor attributed the newly coined nationalist slogan, '*Sotsialisticheskaya rodina*,' meaning 'Socialist Motherland.' In Voroshilov many Soviet nationalists saw a stalwart adversary to Russian internationalists like Kamenev and Zinoviev and Radek. Behind the mystery of all the Trotskyist trials and executions many Russians suspected the directing hand of the Red war lord.

IV

As a prelude to the astonishing trials, one must keep in mind certain dates and circumstances. The first, chronologically, was June 8, 1934. On that day the Soviet Government published a decree which for the first time gave official sanction to grave and widespread fears. It had been rumored that to make men confess the OGPU confronted its victims with the choice between personal exile or death, and similar punishment to near and dear ones. This was confirmed by the decree of June 8, 1934.

It reads: —

CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE of the U. S. S. R. decrees: To amend the law dealing with crimes against the state, as follows:

I. (1) Treason, that is, acts committed by Soviet citizens aimed at impairing the military might of the Soviet Union, its independence and inviolability of its territory, as espionage, revealing of a military or state secret, escape to the enemy, running or flight across the frontiers, are punishable by imposition of the supreme penalty — shooting with confiscation of property, and under extenuating circum-

stances by ten years' imprisonment with confiscation of property.

I. (2) The same crimes when committed by men in military service are punishable by extreme penalty — shooting with confiscation of property.

I. (3) *In the event of one in the military service escaping abroad, the adult members of his family, if they by any means coöperated in the attempt or act of treason, or only knew about it and failed to report to the authorities, are punishable by imprisonment of from five to ten years, with confiscation of all of their property.*

I. (4) *All the rest of the adult members of the traitor's family, who at the moment of the commission of the crime either lived with the miscreant or received his support, are punishable by loss of all citizenship rights and five years' exile to the remote regions of Siberia.*

I. (5) *Failure to report by any other citizen (not in military service) is punishable under Article XII of this law.*

(Signed) President of the Central Executive Committee U. S. S. R.

M. KALININ

Acting Secretary of the Central Executive Committee

M. A. MEDVEDIEV

Moscow, Kremlin, June 8, 1934

Published, *Pravda*, June 9, 1934

Is it not reasonable to assume that the publication of this frightful law was due to some new and powerful influence in the Kremlin? If we bear in mind that the law deals with crimes of a military nature, is there any escape from the conclusion that its enactment followed a demand from the Commissary of War? And, most important of all, does not the document shed some light at least on the mystery of the confessions offered at the Trotskyist trials?

The second date to be remembered is July 10, 1934, for on that day the Central Executive Committee of the U. S. S. R. passed a law providing for the creation of a military collegium, vested with the sole and exclusive right to try men for counter-revolution. By a stroke of the pen the new law

destroyed Yagoda's power over life and death. It spelled the end of seventeen years of slaughter in the OGPU basement by decision of Yagoda's own collegium, and it placed the dreaded weapon in new hands — those of the Commissary of War. For who else could dominate a military collegium, save the man in control of the Red Army?

The law of July 10, 1934, deprived the OGPU of a vast power. The decree took from the Soviet secret service the right inherited from its parent organization, the Cheka: the right to arrest, try, and execute in every case involving so-called grave counter-revolution. It was within the discretion of Yagoda and his hand-picked collegium to determine the nature and gravity of any given offense or misdemeanor and label it: 'Grave.' Thus in the fall of 1930, when the peasants reacted to intensive collectivization by slaughtering their own cattle, Yagoda had spread terror in rural and in urban Russia. By way of 'explaining the real cause of the meat shortage' to the restive city proletariat, he had forty-eight officials of the Soviet meat trusts arrested, tried by his collegium, and shot — all in one day. This unfortunately was not an isolated case. In his day of unchallenged power, Yagoda had his spies everywhere, including the army, not barring the general staff and Voroshilov's own headquarters. There was hardly a secretary, save Stalin's, who could be considered immune from the obligation to report on his chief's doings. Verily, throughout all those long years, Yagoda had been Stalin's alert eye and his mighty fist.

The decree served not only to arm Voroshilov with the weapon essential to the maintenance of dictatorship; it virtually placed Russia in a state of court-martial, with military tribunals holding full sway over civilian life. The wave of military terror that followed

Kirov's assassination offered ample proof of this simple truth.

During the entire period of Yagoda's supremacy there had not been in Russia a single assassination, or even an attempt on the life of any Soviet dignitary. Is there any unbiased observer of the Soviet scene who was not amazed by the ease and freedom with which Stalin and his chief aides went about Moscow throughout all the early years of the Trotskyist struggle, including the period when the defendants at the trials, according to their own confession, conspired to behead the Revolution? Yet, exactly four months and twenty days after Yagoda was deprived of his command, an assassin named Nikolaiev shot and killed Kirov, a member of the Politbureau, the sanctum of Bolshevik power. Was it mere coincidence? The motives that prompted Kirov's killing remain mystifying. The only element of certainty in the case, and the factor which may have made Kirov the target of the opposition, was his appointment in 1926 to replace Zinoviev as head of the Leningrad branch of the Communist Party.

Kirov first attracted Stalin's attention during the civil war, when, as military commissary in Caucasia and Astrakhan, he ruthlessly suppressed all opposition to the Soviets. In the years that followed, Kirov drifted from place to place, receiving an occasional organizing assignment from Stalin and performing it well. He had three assets that qualified him for striking organizational work: the gift of oratory, an instinct for picking reliable key men, and above all a ruthlessness in suppression of opposition. At a moment when Leningrad — the cradle of the revolution — seemed to have gone completely Zinovievist, Stalin thought of Kirov as the best man for an exceedingly difficult job. He guessed right. In one year Kirov managed to destroy

the old Zinovievist party fortress. The task of bringing Leningrad into line was accomplished by means of sweeping repression. The work done in Leningrad assured Kirov's political future. His rise was rapid. In four years the relatively unknown man had climbed the rungs of the Soviet ladder, and become one of Stalin's closest collaborators.

Immediately following Kirov's assassination, the OGPU arrested hundreds of suspects. The arrests took place simultaneously in Leningrad, Moscow, Kiev, and Minsk. Within a fortnight, 103 of the men held were tried by military tribunals and shot. The man hunt gained momentum from day to day. It went on throughout 1935 under the slogan, 'Exterminate all Trotskyites!'

V

The year 1935 was marked by the emergence of five new marshals in Russia. These new lords of war were Marshal Voroshilov, a former worker in one of the Tsar's artillery plants; Marshal Yegorov, a colonel in the Tsar's army; Marshal Blücher, officially a former sergeant in the Tsar's army, but in reality a man with a mysterious past, whose birthplace remains unknown and who is said to be a descendant of the famous German General Blücher; Marshal Budenny, a corporal in the Tsar's Cossack cavalry; and last, Marshal Tukhachevsky, a former lieutenant of the Imperial Guards, a great strategist, frequently referred to as the Red Napoleon, who, inspired by Leon Trotsky, had led the Soviet hosts to the gates of Warsaw with the cry, 'Give us Europe!'

Tukhachevsky, admittedly the most brilliant of the five, is no longer alive. The young genius on whom Lenin pinned his hopes in the most precarious moments of the Revolution had suddenly and mysteriously been de-

nounced as a 'Fascist traitor' and executed, together with seven other Generals. Thus died a soldier whom millions in Soviet Russia had been taught to revere as one of the heroes of the civil war, a man who at the age of twenty-six had led an army across the Urals and destroyed Admiral Kolchak's White hosts. And the mystery of Tukhachevsky's tragic end is intensified by the fact that the enemy or enemies who evidently planned his undoing struck their blow at the moment of the Marshal's appointment as the Soviet delegate to King George's coronation. Tukhachevsky was suddenly transferred to an obscure command in the provinces. Shortly after there followed the accusation of treason, and swift death.

Is it conceivable that Russia's national hero, the man who proved his devotion throughout the civil war, would suddenly turn traitor? Is it not logical to assume that Tukhachevsky fell victim to the machinations of a Kremlin clique determined to destroy not only Leninism, but one who might defend its cause in a future war no less effectively than in the past?

But to return to 1935. The decree creating the five Marshals stirred up a feeling of resentment the country over. Things reached a point where the War Commissariat felt called upon to 'explain' the reason for the restoration of a military aristocracy in the eighteenth year of the Revolution. In a special booklet for the soldiery entitled *On Guard of the Fatherland*, the rank and file of the Red Army were advised:

'The institution of military titles will help to determine the qualifications of commanders and chiefs of the Red Army, and make use of them in the best interests of the cause.'

But the explanation failed to explain. Far from quieting passions, it had the effect of carrying disappointment to the military camps, to barracks. Had not

the Red Army marched to victory under the leadership of comrade commanders? Was there anything more precious to the Soviet soldier than his privilege of addressing a commander as his social equal? Had not the Soviet commanding staff for years stressed this point above all others?

Soviet workers began to voice individual protests. As is usual in Soviet Russia, men had no means of organizing a mass movement. They were denied the rights of free speech, strike, and demonstration, but in factories, offices, in homes and on the street, even in camp and barrack, wherever people met they spoke in derision of the Kremlin's latest escapade. At the official factory meetings workers showered the presiding officers with embarrassing questions. The widespread feeling of discontent prevailed throughout the winter, spring, and summer of 1936, and was in truth one of the causes behind the new epidemic of sabotage that worked havoc with the increased schedules of production.

Meanwhile the day of the promised Soviet constitution was fast approaching. In the fall of 1936 the Kremlin suddenly served notice of its decision to liquidate Trotskyism once for all. As an initial step in the new campaign of terror it determined to court-marshal Kamenev, Zinoviev, and fourteen other 'criminals' — most of them prominent Bolsheviks.

What prompted the renewal of Trotsky warfare at that moment? Was it fear that the prevailing discontent might possibly find expression in an electoral victory of the old Leninists and Trotskyists, now that the government stood committed to the secret ballot? Or did the international situation, owing to developments in Spain, appear so grave at the time as to imbue the Soviet general staff with the belief that a powerful blow ought to be dealt Trotskyism, as a condition precedent

to an impending major war? The timing of the trials remains a mystery. The only elements of certainty in the situation are, first, that *the announcement of the Kamenev-Zinoviev trial preceded by about four months the scheduled adoption of the new constitution*, and secondly, that *one of the fundamentals in the Soviet war tactics is an appeal to the foreign laboring masses for support of the Red Army in the event of an international war*. How could the Kremlin expect international support and sympathy in face of Trotsky's repeated accusations of treason to Leninism and degeneration of the Revolution? How could Moscow meet charges so grave, unless it succeeded in destroying and discrediting the Trotsky movement both in and out of Russia?

VI

The first trial took place in Moscow on August 19, 1936. Sixteen defendants faced Voroshilov's court-martial, two of them being Kamenev and Zinoviev, men who stood closest to Lenin during the years of his exile and who were with him in triumph until the day of his death.

The second Trotskyist trial began on January 23, 1937. Chief among the accused were Pyatakov, Vice-Commissary of Heavy Industry, the accredited genius behind the two five-year plans; Radek, the brilliant journalist; Sokolnikov, former Ambassador to the Court of Saint James's; Serebriakov, former Commissary of the Land Transportation Commissariat and Lenin's close friend; Muralov, Commandant of the Moscow garrison under Lenin, and twelve others. Thirteen of the accused were condemned and shot, four were sentenced to ten years' exile. Radek and Sokolnikov are among the survivors; it is probable that they were spared so that they may testify against their friends.

The feature common to both trials is that they rest on such a solid base of self-accusation. Without these admissions of guilt, both cases fall to earth. The very first thing to remember in this connection is the decree of June 8, 1934, officially sanctioning the punishment of relatives and friends for counter-revolutionary crimes committed by their kin. In face of such practice it is not at all difficult to imagine the tragedy of men compelled to choose between dire punishment to relatives or friends and their own personal destruction. This is third degree with a modern twist.

Yet, dreadful as it is in its implication, the decree extending penalty to near and dear ones can hardly be considered as a complete solution of the whole mystery of the confessions. At best, the law helps to reveal but a portion of the stage upon which the drama was enacted. Despite all the terror, it is indeed hard to conceive of a number of old Leninists turning cowards, without a single exception. How is it that no one among the accused dared to challenge the accuser, even if such act involved the sacrifice of relative or friend? Was it hope of pardon that made them confess? But how could the accused in the second trial entertain any such hopes in the knowledge that all sixteen in the first trial were shot despite their confessions?

A guilty conscience and anxiety genuinely to repent would be the simplest answer, but even if one is disposed to accept the Kremlin version at face value, he is confronted with the necessity of taking for granted confessions to some crimes which according to available evidence never took place.

Thus, the defendant Pyatakov had testified to a meeting with Trotsky in Oslo, Norway. Pyatakov stated that he flew to Oslo on December 12, 1935, and that he had met Trotsky on the

same day. As it took him, according to his evidence, no more than half an hour to go from the airport to Oslo, it could have been no other airport than Kjelleve — the only landing place for airplanes near the Norwegian capital. There is now ample evidence to the effect that no airplane had landed at Kjelleve either on December 12, 1935, or on any other day of that month. During the winter months there is, as a rule, very little air travel to Norway.

Pyatakov's confession to an evidently uncommitted crime was followed by similar testimony offered by Romm, former *Izvestia* correspondent in Washington. Romm testified to a meeting with Trotsky in Paris at a moment when it evidently could not have taken place, simply because Trotsky was not in Paris at the time. Romm confessed to a rendezvous with Trotsky in Bois de Boulogne, Paris, which allegedly took place in the latter part of July 1933. On this point, too, there seems to be a preponderance of evidence to the effect that Trotsky had been ill at the time and confined to bed hundreds of miles from the French capital. The official record of the court proceedings shows the marked contrast between the declarations of guilt offered at the first and the second trials. The confessions of Kamenev, Zinoviev, and all of their colleagues are confined strictly to terroristic plans and conspiracies. From beginning to end it was a conspiracy to behead the government.

Things seemed to have changed radically by the time the Kremlin was ready to try the second case. Only four and a half months had elapsed since the execution of the first sixteen, and although the second, so-called reservist centre was in point of personnel and politically inferior to the first, it nevertheless developed plans and energies on so fantastic a scale as to give the testimony a distinct touch of melo-

drama. May it not be that the first case was prepared under Yagoda's eye when he was still chief of the secret service, while the second case was whipped into shape by Yagoda's espionage machine after the removal of their chief and the appointment of Yashov, a new and relatively inexperienced man?

The difficulties which Yagoda's successor had to cope with can be readily imagined. The highly expert Soviet espionage machine is Yagoda's creation. Every important OGPU man owes to Yagoda his career and his great privileges. Can there be much doubt that these men resented the removal of their chief and the intrusion of a newcomer who could know but little of their highly specialized, invariably secret and delicate work? What means had Yashov of checking on these experts, once they undertook, at a hint from their former master, to compromise the second trial, and with it the dominating influence in the Kremlin?

Yagoda's arrest seems to be a dim light in the darkness that enveloped the Kremlin since the first announcement of the latest anti-Trotsky campaign. The erstwhile dispenser of life and death was jailed shortly after the doubtful testimony in the second trial became generally known.

The fall of the once mighty Red satrap is likely to prove but a prelude to the desperate struggle which seems to have just begun. With all the advantage inherent in the control of the terrorist tribunals, the Commissar of War seems to enjoy little ease of mind. The most noteworthy among Voroshilov's latest activities are the restoration of civil war military councils (through which medium he evidently aims to exercise rigid control over commanders), the recent shootings of Trotskyists in Siberia and elsewhere, and the amazing execution of Tukhachevsky and the seven Generals.

Indeed Voroshilov's lot is not to be

envied. The War Commissary had only two years of elementary schooling. The first contact with scholarly Marxists had the effect of dwarfing the man's peasant essence to the zero point. The Stalin-Trotsky fight helped Voroshilov to regain his emotional balance. He began by despising the intellectuals, and the feeling soon developed into hatred. It grew in intensity, reaching full force at the moment when the Kremlin, fearful of war, determined to strengthen its military arm.

Voroshilov was first to raise the cry, 'Defend the Socialist Fatherland!' Never much of an internationalist, he saw the solution for Russia's problems in a retreat to a position for which there can be but one name — Red Fascism, with all of its trimmings, not barring the secret ballot at the point of a bayonet.

Ex-Premier Rykov seems to have been right after all. Ten years ago the Soviet Union was in no danger of Bonapartism. The peril lay elsewhere. The approach of the twentieth anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution finds Russia a more perilous country for old Communists to live in than even Nazi Germany or Fascist Italy. While the new wave of Red terror seems to have engulfed the whole country, its force is admittedly directed not only against the old and tried Leninists, but staunch Stalinists as well. And from this maze of facts and fiction, inference and speculation, there stand out two amazing paradoxes — one of Stalin shooting Stalinists, and the other of the Kremlin giving aid and comfort to international Fascism by destroying the Red Army's best leadership.

Can it be that the latest Red purges bespeak Stalin's cool head and steady hand, or is there a new influence at work in the Kremlin — a spirit more impetuous than that of the Man of Steel?

LITERATURE THROUGH A KNOTHOLE

A Preface to Bartlett

BY CHRISTOPHER MORLEY

[FOR two years and more, Christopher Morley and Louella D. Everett have been engaged in revising and enlarging Bartlett's *Familiar Quotations*, the Eleventh Edition of which will emerge from the press in October 1937 with this delightful preface by its Editor in Chief. — THE EDITORS]

I

WHAT makes words memorable? It would be useful if we knew, but I doubt we ever shall. The subtle adhesions of adult memory are unintentional and unconscious; that is the true Learning by Heart we were told of in school, when they really meant Learning by Rote. Grown minds have an abated regard for the operations of conscious intelligence. We have found (in many a secret surprise) that the images which sink deepest are often those we scarcely knew, at the time, we were noticing at all. Like a skillful diver, they went through the outer film of sense with very little splash.

The mind has a delicate property of surface tension, a retracting and tightening function, which creates a superficial envelope against too easy interruption or dispersion of the precious Me within. Whatever somehow punctures that protection is latent for memory. All we dare say about it is that it satisfies some inner necessity of

our own, whether it be Milton or Eddie Guest. It is most likely to be metrical, because we are ourselves. Well did the word 'incantation,' meaning speech singable, come to assume the suggestion of witchcraft. One can melodize words for years without stopping to consider how silly they are. Who cares? The magic happens: —

It creeps into your mind, you find it there.
You are my poem then, for in my heart
Lovelier than a sonnet, you made rhyme
And I had memorized you unaware.

The iniquity of oblivion — willfully translating Sir Thomas Browne's phrase to mean the unfairness of man's forgettings — weighs heavy on anthologists. In Bartlett the problem is at least double: not only to preserve as many as possible of those Household Words which were the original editor's prime search, but to seize also some of the Mindhold Words (even of our own day) which the world hardly yet knows it has absorbed. This is in no sense a collection of personal choices. It is foremost a salvage of those words which users of the English tongue have shown evidence not willingly to let die. This involves a debatable proportion of adipose sentiment and mediocre art — certainly not the least valuable part of the work for any student of intellectual coefficients. The Public must love bad verse, it reads so much of it. It is not often that one finds the

... jewel five words long
That on the stretched forefinger of all Time
Sparkles forever,

or

All the charm of all the Muses
Flowering in a lonely word.

One of the pleasures of this reëditing has been that one collaborator, by long experience with inquiries for the affable familiar ghosts of print, knows acutely what readers want; and the other believes himself to know what they ought to want. They have striven for a happy compromise; in the final decisions I must take full responsibility.

So we have here, within evident fallibilities, a viva voce of English confession from Cædmon, bashful in the byre, down to Nathalia Crane, equally bashful at the paper-box factory in Brooklyn. Chronological arrangement sets the whole story in perspective. My own choice would be to read backward, beginning with moods familiar to-day and tracing upstream and uphill to the far woodlands where still tingles the voice of that first cuckoo-singer. When I was a boy in Baltimore I used to hear often of a place called Blue Ridge Summit. I never went there; it would probably disillusion; but what a picture of mystic beauty was in the name! To this day I think of the earliest masters of our tongue as not merely a beginning but also a goal. Chaucer is to me truly a Blue Ridge Summit. No poet was in the least astonished by Professor Einstein's pronouncements about the relativity of Time. We knew it always: here is Chaucer thinking the very thoughts that come to us, so hot and immediate and self-englamoured, to-day of days. It is not we who think, but life that thinks us, and Chaucer seems more modern to me than most radio announcers.

(In fact I'm not at all sure that the present era is 'modern' at all. We seem to be sliding rapidly into mediævalism, the Thirty Years' War kind of thing.

The poets are the most savage historians. There have been plenty who thought 'The world falls asunder, being old' — and ends 'Not with a bang but a whimper.' And in this preface, by the way, I'm going to quote whatever comes into my head without always grieving to identify. I've done enough identifying for a lifetime.)

II

You don't labor in a Pandect like this without perceiving that it's not just a scrapbook of belles-lettres, but also a sort of anthropology; a social history; a diary of the race. Here are the Now It's Got To Be Tolds of a good many generations. What is the quality of permanence that makes it worth-while to pack in our scanty baggage, for one more trudging hike forward, the remarks of our predecessors? Man is a sententious animal, splendid in syllables and pompous in afterthought; nothing makes so bewildered an impression on him as the disparity between his words and his behavior. He shrewdly learns not to put too much of what he thinks into writing, lest he be held responsible. Therefore he is the more astonished, touched with delight and compunction, when he observes that what he himself had hidden someone else has uncovered. Having learned so much of the cunning of concealment, he is fit to appreciate the joy of exposure. One of the most appealing phases of the entertainment called Literature is a psychological strip-tease.

It would be hard to aver which gives us more pleasure when we find it in print: what we wanted to say, or what we wanted not to say. The most familiar dictum of course is that of Pope: —

... Nature to advantage dressed,
What oft was thought, but ne'er so well expressed.

Our satisfaction lies in that delicate divergence between the words before

us and the words we ourselves would have used for the same thought (if we had had the same thought). We must not *quite* have had it; but we must have been troubled by its approach. The happy man lives subconsciously to-day among thoughts that he will render articulate to-morrow. Nothing is more exciting (you can see hints and murmurs of it in all sorts of places) than to watch the world getting ready to think ideas quite different from those it is at the moment openly proclaiming.

A book like this can be the bliss of solitude; but solitude is chiefly a bliss when it can be terminated at will. Probably the 'quality of permanence' is most often found in those passages that strike through into the central loneliness of the heart, for which it scarcely expected any relief. Rilke, the brilliant young German, once said, 'Love consists in this, that two solitudes protect and touch and greet each other.' And literature is at its happiest in that function of companionship. It offers us the verification of our own secrets without any possible embarrassment. The same Rilke wrote a book, a very moving one for a few readers, called *The Journal of My Other Self*. I like to think that for some this Bartlett can be the journal of another self, continuing over some six or seven hundred years. Not just a work of reference, but a work of conference; a nest egg for the mind. I have occasionally imagined the editors as Huck and Tom on the raft, floating down the big river and trying to pull aboard, from so much miscellaneous jetsam, what would be enduringly useful.

The shock of accuracy is not the only quality that helps words to live; there is also the shock of surprise. And there is the haphazard contingent of mere chance. The great saying requires wit, occasion, and — good luck. Many such have undoubtedly gone into the record wrongly ascribed. Most of our

hodiernal instinctive palavers were already old when Heywood collected them in 1546. As the title-page of a famous eighteenth-century volume of erotica put it: *Prostant apud Neminem, sed tamen Ubique*.¹ This can hardly be duly translated; as every lover of language knows, nothing ever can. One can render, but there is always a shrinkage in carrying across. The more volatile the wine, the more ullage.

Still pursuing — just for the joy of speculation — this quiddity of endurance in written thought. The pleasure of self-identification; the delight of ideas shrewdly or beautifully put; and then how about a certain overtone of sincerity? Hard to define, but recognizable to intuition. There has been much lamentation lately about the decline of poetry, the unintelligibility of modern verse, a general feeling that (as Roy Campbell said) the young poet is an angry man wearing his liver on his sleeve. Then one evening this spring I listened to the radio (I don't often) and heard (feeling that significant chilblain on the withers) voices saying something new in a new way. It was Archibald MacLeish's remarkable fable, *The Fall of the City* — the first time (I think) that a play in verse, written designedly for that oral medium, had been broadcast. Here was a true poet using a fresh technique with beauty and power, saying things of meaning, adapting all the resources of an ancient skill to the opportunities of to-day. The ear is an unsophistered recipient. Among so vast a listening there must have been many who were not likely to observe the conscious efficacy of the poet's devices, or even his political wit, but they must have felt the thrill of that drama on the clairaudient nerve. I said to myself with delight, Here begins a whole new era for poetic drama. And I shall continue to disregard, as I always have,

¹ 'For sale by no one, but available everywhere.' *Nugae Venales sive Thesaurus Ridendi*, 1720.

any grievances about the failure of the arts. True, they are painfully subject to imitative corruptions of mode, but (as the Chinaman said) in due season we are granted the artists we require; and they the emotions they need. The emotion comes first.

Sincerity — passion — the sense that the man has something to say — the old alarm, 'There's something burning' — these rise above, or make unnecessary, 'pretty little tricks of style.' How it pleases to hear Sir Walter Raleigh (the modern one, distinguished learner and teacher of letters) confess in a fine sonnet, 'I never cared for literature as such.' He continues: —

The spondee, dactyl, trochee, anapaest,
Do not inflame my passions in the least;
And cultured persons do not please me much.

But there is one kind of writing, he says, that surely blasts our indifference: —

One book among the rest is dear to me;
As when a man, having tired himself in deed
Against the world, and falling back to write,
Sated with love, or crazed by vanity,
Or drunk with joy, or maimed by Fortune's spite,
Sets down his Paternoster and his Creed.

Of these personal outcries, wrung from men and women in the strong twist of life, there are plenty in Bartlett. There is also more laughter than you might suppose. The English-speaking peoples are considered sombre-minded, but they often have a way of making a joke when no one is listening. They even laugh at themselves, which makes it unanimous. It often strikes me as odd, by the way, that some of the most amusing books in the world have no reputation for humor. I have seen a roomful of people in the purest mirth over Dr. Johnson's *Lives of the Poets*, which is not commonly thought of as a work of merriment. But, as Swift suggested in the 'Voyage to Laputa,' extracting sunshine from cucumbers is an unlikely project, and too many of the professionals of letters have the cucumber temperament. The sudden

glory that maketh those grimaces called laughter (Hobbes) must always remain rare, though a man who retains any of the impressible gust of childhood can scarcely walk along a city street without at least a twitching cheek. But, taken in print, we are mostly a solemn crowd. As Dr. Johnson said of Pope's grotto, 'An Englishman has more frequent need to solicit than exclude the sun.' And I think that in this new edition Bartlett is a little less gloomy than before. But old John Bartlett himself, as his letters show, had his lighter moments. His first edition appeared while he was a bookseller in Cambridge, Massachusetts; and only a creature of humor can survive the difficulties of that exacting trade. Let the others hanker, as Jeremy Taylor said, for 'strange flesh and heaps of money and popular noises.'

III

The arts, we were saying, are specially susceptible to changes of fashion. One of the prime values of chronological arrangement is that it's possible to trace the diverse tastes, the prevailing moods, of different epochs; and to see how zigzag are the frontiers between periods which textbooks mark off (for convenience only) so net and clear. Everything has to be said all over again, in its own tone of voice, for each succeeding generation. (And thank goodness: if people realized, for instance, that almost everything conceivably sayable had been said in Montaigne, why should they ever buy another book?) I suppose it is natural for the very young to resent, or reject, the thought that everything has already been said; at any rate a strong instinct bids them listen to it only from some of their own kidney. Take for instance the note of *lacrimae rerum*. About every thirty or forty years some singer is likely to pluck that string with

just the touch the human ear craves. Toward 1790 it was Robert Burns. In the 1820's, Byron. About 1860 Fitzgerald was adapting the tune from Omar. In the late nineties it was A. E. Housman; in the twenties of our own century, Miss Millay. It will be due again presently, and will be (quite rightly) hailed by its contemporaries as thrillingly new, poignant, unique.

In the condensation of Bartlett the reader has the pleasure of tracing down his own paths of affiliation and literary genealogy; and the rather frequent cross references often show the same thought expressed in different ways, which is the supreme vintage-tasting luxury of the connoisseur. I have smiled a good many times at a remark made by the publishers on the wrapper of a recent book of verse by a young writer. '—,' they said, 'scorns the devices of his poetic elders.' As if that were conceivably so of anyone sensitive enough, or grateful enough to our inheritance, to be worth the name of poet. Certainly no one ever undertook the task of editing an anthology without saluting old footprints in joy and reverence, as Chaucer himself did in that exquisite passage at the close of his *Troilus*. Let me quote a word from the king of critics in our lifetime, the magnificent Saintsbury, who spoke of 'the most degrading of intellectual slaveries — that of the exclusive Present.'

So much may be said as reassurance for those who might have feared that our good old Bartlett had too violently Gone Modern. At the same time rather extensive clearances have been made. The job, I have said to myself many times, is really that of sweeping the hearth of literature. A menial service, in one sense, yet also in any civilized household an important one. We serve here, no matter how many the errors of judgment and oversight, as proxy for Posterity. It costs a pang to sweep out

some worthy who 'flourished' in his time and was a hearty favorite fifty years ago but is plainly no longer necessary. (Humanity can't go on carrying all its baggage forever.)

Ancient footnotes that have come downstream through former editions have often been dropped when they seemed pointless: one remembers the man (I forget who) described by Dr. Johnson as having 'a rage for saying something when there was nothing to be said.' A good many shrill huzzas from the patriots of '76 (especially around Boston) have faded out, and perhaps some allusions to unfamiliar names such as Axel Oxenstiern and Von Münch Bellinghausen. Wordsworth's bleatings when he was fecund rather than facund; lozenges from the original Smith Brothers (of the *Rejected Addresses*); lesser bits of Byron, once so fashionable; Robert Pollok, a meteor in his day and confidently consigned to immortality by his epitaph — how much of that sort of thing is still essential to this wallowing world? How about the mysterious 'Miss Wrother,' to whom Hope 'told a flattering tale,' but disappointment followed? Sometimes mere chance intervened to prolong someone's foundering clutch on futurity. I was about to throw Letitia Landon overboard when Governor Alfred Landon of Kansas was nominated to the Presidency (in 1936). So I pulled L. E. L. back on to the raft as a small kindness toward keeping the name going. (L. E. L. may yet live longer than that candidacy.) Sometimes an old tidbit was left in with perhaps a little touch of malice, to emphasize the ironies of time — for instance Nat Willis's 'The Death of Harrison,' who

. . . ascended Fame's ladder so high:
From the round at the top he has stepped to the sky.

But there are awkward questions to ask one's self. How much of *Aurora*

Leigh is still desirable? Who was Thomas Kibble Hervey, and how did he get into Bartlett, Tenth Edition, when his exact contemporary Nathaniel Hawthorne did n't? For there were some curious gaps in the Tenth Edition. No Herman Melville, no Emily Dickinson, no O. Henry — most astonishing of all, not a line of William Blake. Even De Quincey and Hazlitt appeared only in footnotes.

The questions we asked ourselves just above are ill to answer; however answered, there is sure to be grievance somewhere. In such a job one resigns one's self to being the most reprobated editor in print. Perhaps even, to the observer twenty-three years hence, present oversights will seem as fantastic as those of 1914 do now. Previous editors adhered, almost with pedantry, to the touchstone of *familiarity*. Only phrases or quotations that had gained wide recognition, become hypodermic, were admitted. It becomes then a significant footnote in literary history to observe that in 1914 neither Melville nor Emily Dickinson had gained enough currency to catch the eye of our toastmaster. In the matter of new inclusions this edition is not so stringent: we have tried to make literary power the criterion rather than width and vulgarity of fame.

But the hearth must be swept; the new clean fire is not to be choked by too much débris of the past. Every fire builder knows that a bed of ashes and used coals helps the fresh blaze, catches the glow and radiates warmth, gives depth and bottom to the flame — up to a point. But there comes a time to open the chute and rake out old cinders. I breathe a small secret sigh over some of the vanished authors, and keep their names to myself. Unless some morbid scholiast compares the indexes of the Eleventh and Tenth Editions they will never be missed. And there continues to be joy in those who go bravely on

toward the unknown future by the glory of one great line alone — for instance John William Burgon, with his 'rose-red city half as old as Time.' As for Axel Oxenstiern and Von Münch Bellinghausen, they deserve a foot-noted or marginal immortality for their names alone, and as far as I can help them toward it I shall. They fascinate me as the pale anonymous curate (squelched by Dr. Johnson) fascinated Max Beerbohm. See Beerbohm's essay, 'A Clergyman' — indeed, see all his essays.

IV

The tactful editor does not too intrusively nudge his guests. What a genial impudence was that of the magazine that used to allot 'reading time' — so many minutes and seconds — for its customers to accomplish a given piece. Suppose, in the middle of an article or story, one actually paused to meditate? If we had to specify any limited duration for this work, I suppose it would have to be twenty-three years, since that seems to be the established elapse between editions of Bartlett: 1891–1914–1937 — we should be ripe for another about 1960. I observe that longevity has been vouchsafed to Bartlett editors. Old J. B. died at eighty-five, and Dr. Dole at eighty-four. The present editors are hopeful. I like the letter J. B. wrote to his publisher on June 4, 1891, when correcting proof for the Ninth Edition. He then described his book as 'a middle-aged gentleman of thirty-six years, with the tallow which age brings. . . . There never was such a repertory before and it can never be superseded. You will be troubled at not finding some of your good things, but what could I do? The sensation of fulness is agreeable, that of repletion is painful.'

We have eased the old gentleman of some spiritual tallow; but the interesting thing is to see how well the senior

matter persists. I have not used a tape measure on the galley proofs, but with one portentous exception the order of the leaders in space allotted runs pretty much as it did. Shakespeare and the King James Bible are far in the lead. After them come Milton and Pope. The excitement is to see that Kipling now stands, in the matter of space conceded, just about abreast of Tennyson and Byron. Then come Dr. Johnson, Wordsworth, Browning, Emerson, and Longfellow. This reckoning has not been precisely calculated, but I think no fair-minded observer will deny that it approximates the general human suffrage up to date. And, more than our predecessors, we have paid willing homage to the Muse of our own day. How vast a world of doing and saying (and doubting) has come to view since Dr. Dole wrote the Tenth Edition preface in — mark the date — July 1914. Of the modern short-buskined goddess we have at least been able (with Herrick)

. . . to describe
The happy dawning of her thigh.

Dr. Dole spoke of himself as Elisha inheriting the mantle of Elijah. The successor of Elisha, one remembers, was Jehu; of whom I only know that they broke a box of oil over his head and he drove (or was driven) furiously.

One does not without a twinge of sentiment say good-bye to so long a pastime. I can't help feeling like Old Kaspar in Southey's poem, who sits at his cottage door in the sunset while the grandchildren are playing with the skulls — the skulls of dead authors. The cottage is actual, too: I built myself a pinewood cabin, as aloofly jungled as a Long Island suburb would permit, to consort with the shade of John Bartlett. And my mind goes back to a bitter wintry day when an unexpected visitor joined me. I went out to the cabin to work, and was startled to see sheets of MS. all over the floor, pictures

fallen from the top of the shelves, and a certain 1855 Overholt bottle (long empty, but souvenir of an old literary pilgrimage) toppled over but fortunately undamaged. At first I supposed some human mischief, but, picking up Miss Everett's folios of beautiful typescript, I saw unmistakable proof that the intruder was a bird. Then, from a shadowy perch just under the roof, he swooped across and gave me a start. It was an owl, a handsome fellow with tall ears and speckled breast. He must have come down the chimney. Flattened warily in the triangle of the rafters, he watched me steadily. I whistled at him, tried to frighten him through the open door, but he only coasted from side to side — coming too near my head for comfort. I had no mind to sit there with him perched above me, so I gathered papers and left him in charge, with the door open for exit.

Was it, or was it not, the shade of J. B. himself, offering suggestions? There was a certain facial resemblance . . . and the 1855 bottle was a coincidence; that was the year of Bartlett's first publication (also *Leaves of Grass*). And the book he had chosen for most frequent perching was the Webster's Unabridged. At any rate it was suggestive to be visited by the bird of wisdom in person. We have tried to adhere to the admirable motto long used on the publisher's colophon, *Non refert quam multos sed quam bonos habeas*. Though there have been times when the editors felt like the Elizabethans described by Virginia Woolf — 'Thought plunged into a sea of words and came up dripping.' And I have smiled too at a passage in Melville's preface to *Moby Dick*: —

This mere painstaking burrower and grubworm of a poor devil appears to have gone through the long Vaticans and street-stalls of the earth, picking up whatever random allusions he could anyways find in any book whatsoever, sacred or profane.

OLD UNCLE

BY A. W. SMITH

I

ABDUL HAQ rubbed his hands in water from the brass pot at his side in the ritual washing of the morning. 'God the Merciful, the only God . . .' He murmured the prayer through clogged lips.

The place of mats in Po Twan's shop was filled with the heavy brown smell of burned opium. The Chinaman dozed on his stool by the door. Sweat ran in glistening streams over the folds of his paunch. His yellow skin shone through the dimness.

Abdul Haq blew through the stem of his pipe. With the opium needle he cleared the vent at the bottom of the tiny bowl. He tucked the pipe into the twist of his red and black sarong.

He sat up. His consciousness swung through the emptiness of vast spaces. From the middle of a great silent sea a lonely microscopic body, only the shell of Abdul Haq, looked upwards. His spirit was sad for Abdul Haq.

He felt his way past the Chinaman into the blinding white sunshine of Sule Pagoda Road. He crooked his cotton umbrella over his arm. He walked. His heart was heavy. In the last thirty-six hours in Po Twan's opium shop he had smoked away every anna of available cash.

The life of the Rangoon streets passed him by. Sweating Oriya coolies hove, 'Hu-yah, Hi-yah,' at the rice carts lumbering over cobbles. Wheels of electric trams screamed on the curve.

The cold-drink seller's tinkling bell was bright and incessant as rain. A Sikh policeman ejected a six-foot stream of rich scarlet betel juice.

Eyes heavy and drugged, Abdul Haq walked, meditating.

'I am Abdul Haq . . . elephant rider for the Big Company. I am Abdul Haq. . . .'

Bit by bit he strove to gather the threads of his lost identity.

'I am Abdul Haq . . .'

II

Abdul Haq cared nothing for Englishmen who thought they knew about elephants, not even for Petigo Sahib, head of the Big Company's two thousand elephants, with his thirty years' experience.

When elephants were sick, Petigo gave each one a pound of Epsom salts. If they grew worse he called for drops of their blood on flimsy strips of glass. . . .

Abdul Haq belonged to an older school. As a naked baby he had been hoisted in the crook of an elephant's trunk, to sit on its forehead between his father's knees. He had been cradled between the forefeet of an elephant while his father fed it sugar cane and juice ran in froth from the corners of its jaws.

As he had, so had his father and his father's father before that, as far back

as anyone could remember. Elephant riding was a family affair. Its wisdom was handed down from father to son.

A tiger's whisker in a copper amulet gives strength and courage. A tip of barking deer's horn lifts the poison from snake bite. In cases of cataract, powdered glass must be blown through a bamboo tube into the eye. . . .

Abdul Haq knew these things were good. His father had told him so himself, and his father's father, and his uncle on his mother's side.

Abdul Haq rode Old Uncle, a tusker of enormous size, last of the Rangoon timber elephants. In the old days every teak mill had had its gang of elephants, but they had given way before the march of machinery and been sent back to work in the jungle. Now only Old Uncle was left. He would have gone too, but they said he was too old to learn new tricks. And he had the reputation of being bad.

Old Uncle stayed on to spend his last days hauling gray teak logs from the gray water of the Rangoon River up the gray grease of the tide-flooded banks. It used to be the thing for tourists to come down to the storage ground at Prawn Trap Creek to watch Old Uncle piling teak. At the end of the show Abdul Haq made him give the Grand Salaam. Then Old Uncle held out his trunk for money, which, Abdul Haq always carefully explained, was for sugar cane for Old Uncle and not for any personal profit. The tourists dropped annas into the nozzle of Old Uncle's trunk, and he lifted it up to blow the money into Abdul Haq's lap where he perched on the massive neck.

Every so often Abdul Haq announced that Old Uncle was sick and must go off work for a day or two. The mill manager, concerned only with his log supplies and the sweet running of his dynamos, knew nothing of ele-

phants. He was in Abdul Haq's hands.

But this time Petigo happened to be down in Rangoon from the forests.

'You might go down to Prawn Trap Creek and look over Old Uncle,' said the manager. 'Abdul Haq says he's sick again. It's probably only that Abdul Haq wants a day off to smoke opium, but Old Uncle is something of an institution and we'd hate to lose him.'

Petigo found Old Uncle in the elephant shed, fidgeting from one leg to the other. He clanked his leg chains and blew scraps of grass from his feed pile. He cocked a wicked eye at the door.

Abdul Haq made a low salaam.

'What's the matter?' asked Petigo curtly. He was not going to be taken in.

'Sahib,' said Abdul Haq, 'he does not eat and he does not drink. Old Uncle is very sick.'

'H'm!' said Petigo. 'Let's have a look at him.'

'Come, my lord,' said Abdul Haq coaxingly. Old Uncle grunted and squinted evilly at Petigo.

'Come, pig!' hissed Abdul Haq. He gave Old Uncle a surreptitious swipe on the side of the head with the hook end of the chain.

'What's that? Wind?' said Petigo.

'The Sahib knows all,' said Abdul Haq. 'I will make him sit.'

'Get down, you —' Abdul Haq jabbed hard behind the ear with his iron-shod riding spike.

Old Uncle did not want to get down. He teetered from one foot to the other. He blew a little blast from his trunk. Petigo stepped back. Everyone knew Old Uncle was bad.

Old Uncle liked to see them jump, but he knew it was a trick which could be worked too often. He lowered himself ponderously in the mud, first his hind legs into a kneeling position, then his front legs, very deliberately. He

pluffed at the grass stems and picked at them daintily with the finger of his trunk.

'See, Sahib, he is sick,' whined Abdul Haq. 'He will not eat.' Abdul Haq tendered a brown ball of raw sugar.

Old Uncle sniffed it cautiously. It was unlike Abdul Haq to give him free sugar. In a corner of his massive brain he had a recollection of something very like this. His suspicion was justified. The sugar had been treated with *hing* — asafœtida, if you like. Old Uncle did not like *hing*. He turned from it wearily.

'He does n't act well,' said Petigo. 'Give him a pound of Epsom salts in a bucket of unhusked rice, and see that he is properly scrubbed.'

'The Sahib knows all,' said Abdul Haq.

Petigo did not deny it. He ventured a hand on the ill-fitting gray hide sparsely covered with stiff black bristles. Old Uncle jumped like an outraged girl. Petigo jumped too.

'The Sahib knows all,' repeated Abdul Haq. 'And there will be money for the rice?'

'No,' said Petigo shortly. 'And we must have a blood smear. Do you know how to prepare the slide?'

'Aye, I know, Sahib. But I have no glasses.'

'I'll send them. Take the elephant off work for a couple of days. And let me have fresh slides twice daily. Thus we may watch the changes in his blood as his sickness proceeds.'

Old Uncle was led back into his shed by the ear. He accepted a brown molasses cake from Abdul Haq's hand, and paddy in a bucket — without the salts. Those Abdul Haq set thriftily aside. He would sell them in the bazaar to the Chinese doctor who made red-paper doses brushed with black characters to be taken for wind in the stomach.

III

To Petigo Old Uncle's sickness was a splendid opportunity. His firm's two thousand elephants were spread all over Burma, from the Chin Hills to the Salween gorges, and from Moulmein among the mango trees to Mogaung, where pack bullocks trotted with loads of uncut jade and pickled tea. Often it took two weeks for smears to get in. By that time the elephant was either cured or dead. Sometimes the slides arrived in reasonably good condition. More often they were opaque messes of mould, and Petigo swore and bemoaned the loss to science.

And here was Old Uncle — a sick elephant almost under the microscope. Petigo rubbed his hands. Secretly he hoped it might be something worthwhile. Septicæmia, perhaps, or even — he hardly dared hope — rinderpest, with a chance to use the methylene-blue injection.

Down at Prawn Trap Creek, Abdul Haq was preparing to take a couple of days off. There was no point in resting the beast if the man had to work. He sent for Ali, his sister's son, who worked as a checker in the yard.

'The elephant is sick,' said Abdul Haq. 'And I too — I do not feel well. I will return in two days. The Sahib thinks he can cure the beast by taking of his blood on little glasses. That is nonsense, but harmless.'

Ali bowed his head before his fierce little uncle, who had reached the age when he felt it necessary to conceal the gray hairs in his beard by dyeing it bright scarlet.

'Now do you,' said Abdul Haq, 'take these little glasses and prick the ear of Old Uncle.'

'But I am afraid!' quavered Ali.

'Afraid!' snorted Abdul Haq. 'I will order that pig. You shall see.'

Old Uncle was busy with his breakfast of a cartload of green fodder.

'My lord,' said Abdul Haq, 'your servant is sick. I go for rest and medicine. Now do you let this worthless boy prick the august ear — thus.'

Old Uncle swished a trunkful of green stuff on the floor to remove the dirt. He munched on.

'I go, my lord,' said Abdul Haq. 'Be good, princeling.' He swung a short length of chain threateningly. Old Uncle rolled his red pig's eyes at Abdul Haq and paused in his munching.

'You see?' said Abdul Haq. 'It is easy. And if I come back to find that you have not taken of the blood of Old Uncle I will beat you.'

Ali bowed miserably. He was afraid of Old Uncle, but he was more afraid of Abdul Haq. He watched his uncle's swaggering figure out to the clack and bustle of Strand Road.

Over rice and curried mango fish, Ali made his complaint to his fellow checkers. 'My uncle has gone to drink the black smoke at the Chinaman's shop. He has left that elephant to me, and I dare not go near that swine of swine. He will kill me. But if I do not take his blood my uncle, Abdul Haq, — God rest his soul, — will beat me with the chain.'

The others clicked their tongues in sympathy. Ali sighed a deep sigh. He spooned his fingers into the bowl. He heaped buttered rice on a flap of greasy bread. He dipped it in the curried mango fish. He stuffed his mouth with forefinger and thumb.

'*Ai me,*' he moaned.

Mahommed Ganni, the head checker, belched appreciation of the meal. He turned his back to wash his mouth with water from his brass pot.

'But why, O brother?' he said. 'Why not send the little glasses without the blood of the elephant?'

'And have the Sahib down here raging?' Ali snorted derision.

'Yes,' said Mahommed Ganni softly. 'But that goat — has it not blood?

The blood of an elephant — the blood of a goat. Who knows?'

Not for nothing had Mahommed Ganni risen to be head checker. Ali gaped in admiration.

IV

It took almost exactly twenty-four hours to bring Petigo. The watchman came running over the logs.

'The Sahib!' he cried excitedly. 'The Sahib comes!'

Mahommed Ganni went forward to meet the storm. Experience had taught him it was the best way.

'Abdul Haq is sick, your honor.' He spoke as man to man. His manner was frank. 'He has gone to the bazaar for medicine.'

'Then who sent these blood slides?' Petigo had them in his hand. He was really angry.

'The blood slides, your honor?' Mahommed Ganni looked at them curiously as if he had never helped to hold the goat. 'Ah, that I know not, Sahib. But perhaps Ali, the son of Abdul Haq's sister, perhaps he can tell. From Old Uncle came —'

'Nonsense!' said Petigo.

'The Sahib knows,' said Mahommed Ganni gently, in a tone Petigo found particularly infuriating.

Ali came cringing. 'From Old Uncle came the blood.'

'That's a lie,' said Petigo. 'I don't know what blood it was, but it was n't Old Uncle's. But now we will get it. Fetch out the elephant.'

'Sahib, we dare not. Abdul Haq —'

'Fetch him out! Take him down by the logs. On the mud. Then I can take a slide where he cannot rise.'

Mahommed Ganni shrugged his shoulders. He gave Ali a little push.

'I am afraid,' wailed Ali.

'Fetch him,' ordered Petigo firmly.

In the elephant shed Old Uncle made no move as Ali entered. He was lying

down. He was comfortable. But Ali was desperate. He seized the heavy iron ankus which his uncle always used. He advanced menacingly. He swung himself to Old Uncle's neck.

'Now,' he said. 'Now rise, my lord.'

Old Uncle did not move. Ali struck him a ringing blow on the top of his skull. Old Uncle knew by long experience that more like that would make his head ache. He rose ponderously. He moved with dignity from the shed.

'You see, brothers,' said Ali triumphantly. 'You see, I order and he obeys. He is but a too fat pig.'

To Petigo, balanced on a slippery log on the foreshore, it was a peaceful, everyday scene. Everywhere on the ooze were the rounded gray backs of logs. Beyond ran the dizzily swirling river. The rice mills on the Dallah side were clothed in a smoky haze of heat. From the Irrawaddy Flotilla Company's dockyard came the chatter of the pneumatic riveters and the hiss and stamp of a pile driver. The languid southwest wind carried the putrid whiff of fish pickle and the slightly rotten smell of the river at low tide.

As he looked about him from his log in the gray waste of ooze, Petigo was a little surprised to find himself awaiting Old Uncle's arrival alone. None of the men had come with him. Above him, on firm ground, was a great pile of teak logs, representing Old Uncle's labors. In its deep shadow a panting family of goats sought coolness. Petigo eased the band of his white sun helmet from his forehead. It was very hot.

A buff-funnelled Bibby liner was coming up the river, stern first to keep her steerage way on the racing ebb tide. Her wash set the logs into uneasy motion behind the booms. A feather of white steam fluttered from her funnel. She hooted impatiently for a string of paddy boats. Old Uncle tooted back.

Petigo turned to see the elephant, his great head lowered, picking his way

among the logs. His lower lip hung pendulous. His tusks stuck out aggressively in an ungraceful sweep. They had been cut off at the tips and bound with iron. His great warty feet squelched in the slime. The gray mudhoppers fled before his shadow to bury themselves in the cool safety of the ooze.

'Seems fit enough to-day,' murmured Petigo. 'I'll sack that swipe Abdul Haq when he gets back.'

Old Uncle lifted his wicked little pig's eyes and saw Petigo perched on his log. He stopped dead in his tracks. Ali, sitting on the elephant's neck, hammered with his ankus, shouting for Old Uncle to turn.

Old Uncle lunged toward Petigo. Petigo thought of standing his ground. There were the questions of dignity and example. Old Uncle gave a vicious little squeal. Petigo knew the sound. Petigo ran, leaping from log to log. He slipped to be engulfed in slime. He thumbed gray mud from his eyes. He clambered up the bank. In a backward glance he saw Ali sliding to the mud over Old Uncle's tail.

Petigo knew that Old Uncle was at a disadvantage among the logs on the foreshore. Once on hard ground Old Uncle would move with the speed of a fairly fast horse, and the race was up. Petigo, topping the bank with pounding heart and bursting lungs, looked for refuge. The great log pile loomed before him. It seemed impregnable. Petigo sprinted for the pile and began to climb. Sweat impeded his vision. He felt the ground tremble under the pounding feet. Old Uncle gave a toot of triumph as Petigo fought his way blindly upward.

V

The dilated eyes of Abdul Haq saw nothing. Fingering his red beard, he allowed himself to be jostled without protest in the seething crowds of Strand

Road. Instinctively he turned towards Prawn Trap Creek. The Sikh policeman on the corner caught the stale smell of burned opium as he passed. He sniffed suspiciously and shrugged his shoulders. It was no business of his.

Outwardly Abdul Haq was a dignified old Mahommedan. Inwardly he was a man sad for the loss of his self. Folk pushed by him, naked sweating coolies and Burmans strutting peacock-like in the hot sunshine.

Suddenly above the clatter of the noonday streets he seemed to hear the squeal of an angry elephant. He stopped dead. His mind struggled through the smothering blanket of drowsiness.

Strange, he told himself. Strange. Old Uncle is tied with chains in the great elephant shed. Abdul Haq, his rider, has left him with his sister's son, Ali.

From a great height he saw himself, a remote figure, lying on his mat in Po Twan's opium shop.

He turned into the yard. That vicious little scream came again. And there was Old Uncle, riderless, tiptoeing round the log pile.

Abdul Haq watched, fascinated. At any moment he felt that he might slide comfortably awake to see the old Chinaman dozing by the door.

Old Uncle swung his trunk angrily from side to side. He set his forefeet on a log. He tested another with trunk and forefoot to see if it would bear his weight. When it shifted a little he drew back cautiously.

He tried another. Forefeet up, he cocked his head sideways to see over into the crevices of the top, like a cat peering into a bowl of goldfish.

He darted with his trunk. He searched with it in the recesses of the pile.

He produced something. He twirled it on the tip of his trunk. He held it up

to look at it. He glared at it, head cocked on one side.

It was a hat. An Englishman's white sun helmet.

Old Uncle put it carefully on the ground. Deliberately he stepped on it, first one wide warty foot, then the other. He trampled it in the mud.

Abdul Haq's fingers played through the sparse hairs of his beard. He leaned back on the crook of his black cotton umbrella.

Except for the riderless elephant stamping on the white sun helmet everything seemed real enough. The sun beat down on the brown reedy grasses of the mud flats. On the steely glare of the river a red-painted sampan with staring white-painted eyes made slow progress under the lunging strokes of the solitary rower. A string of lighters lagged in the churning wake of a tug.

Old Uncle turned his attention again to the top of the pile. He stood very still, listening. His tattered ears twitched.

Old Uncle's trunk flashed out. It returned triumphantly, fluttering a khaki shirt. He put one foot on it. The sound of rending cloth floated across the heavy stillness of the noonday air.

Abdul Haq was not unused to the strangeness of dreams of the pipe, but this was the strangest of all.

The stillness was broken by another sound, a shouting and a hammering of brass. Old Uncle whirled ponderously on all four feet. From behind the great elephant house, with its worn rubbing post of a single teak log, there emerged a procession, a shouting procession waving cloths and beating brass trays which flashed in the sun. Abdul Haq thought he could make out the portly dignity of Mahommed Ganni, whose wisdom kept him in the rear.

Old Uncle gave one squeal, a high, angry sound. He twirled his trunk. He charged three steps. . . . The noonday

was still again, the procession gone. The sun beat its silent white heat on the silver-gray logs.

For a moment Old Uncle stood still to listen; then with feverish energy he set to work to pull the pile apart. He hooked his trunk around a log. He gave a heave. He stepped neatly back. The outside layer came tumbling.

For Abdul Haq, even in a dream, this was too much. Old Uncle was taking apart the pile which they had made with infinite labor. In the blinding sunshine Abdul Haq set off across the brown burned grass. In his hand he gripped the crook of his cheap cotton umbrella.

Another log came down with a hollow crash. Abdul Haq shouted. Old Uncle did not hear.

From the top of the pile a white arm waved a pair of khaki shorts. Old Uncle snatched at them. One leg from the other he tore them. So.

'*Hut bahadur, kya hai!*' cried Abdul Haq.

Old Uncle waltzed round on his great feet, nimble as a polo pony. His trunk curled up into a ball, his red pig's eyes glared at Abdul Haq. He trumpeted, a muffled, brassy sound.

Old Uncle lunged.

'Now, brother!' squeaked Abdul Haq. He struck out with his black cotton umbrella. Old Uncle cowered.

'Now let me up, my lord,' ordered Abdul Haq. 'Let me up and *jippoo andha* — get a move on.'

Old Uncle crooked his great forefoot at the wrist. Abdul Haq seized the flapping ear. He swung himself to the neck.

From the heart of the log pile came a voice.

'Abdul Haq?'

Old Uncle's ears went forward. He stiffened. The cotton umbrella came down.

'Now, my lord,' said Abdul Haq, 'we'll see who's master. Kneel, you pig.'

Old Uncle knelt. And from the depths of the log pile arose the naked figure of Petigo; his skin rapidly turning a bright prawn red in the blinding sunshine.

Abdul gaped, open-mouthed.

'What the devil are you staring at?' asked Petigo. Above all, he told himself, be dignified.

Abdul Haq averted his eyes like a girl. It is not right for one man to look on another's nakedness.

'And where the hell have you been to?'

Then indeed Abdul Haq knew that he was no longer stretched on his mat in the Chinaman's opium shop.

'You're dismissed,' said Petigo harshly. 'Go down and get your wages. I'll give you a slip for the cashier.'

His hand felt for the pocket of his shorts. His eye fell on Old Uncle, pluffing with the finger of his trunk at some scraps of khaki cloth.

'Oh, well . . .' said Petigo.

THE CHALLENGE TO THE MIDDLE CLASS

BY WILLIAM ALLEN WHITE

I

IN no other land is the middle class so solidly fortified as it is in America. The constitutional prohibition against titles of nobility has done something, but not everything, and perhaps not much to strengthen the foundations of the middle-class fortification. Probably even with lords and ladies and barons and earls in this country, the rich soil, the inestimable wealth beneath the soil, the illimitable forests, the Yankee inventiveness of the race that inhabits the continent, and its isolation between the two great oceans of the globe, would have produced wealth which in modern times is the mark of social distinction, wealth so fabulous that it had to be distributed with something like equity in a middle class.

We had a new kind of human adventure on this continent. In settling the fertile land, opening the mines, and inventing methods of producing wealth from the raw materials so bountifully bestowed upon the continent, we have had two distinct advantages denied to our ancestors in Asia and in Europe. We were free from foreign wars and fears of war for a century and a half. We had the benefit of steam and its machinery in hastening the conquest of the land. Thus we developed a middle class in the United States which has seemed socially, economically, and politically impregnable. Moreover, ladders, runways, ramps, and escalators have been moving during the five gen-

erations, going up and going down from the proletariat to the plutocracy and back, but always stopping for a generation or so in the middle class. While we have had the three classes, they were not hereditary. Only a few old families survive in the plutocracy. Only a few Jukes and morons persist in the proletariat. But both plutocrat and proletariat, passing up and down, have found a salving sense of security. A middle-class complacency has been the ideal American life.

But the swift subsidence of wealth after October 1929 reacted like an earthquake shock upon the American bourgeoisie. The appearance of the unemployed not merely in millions, but in tens of millions, produced a caste with broken morale. That gave the American burghers something to think about.

For the first time in American history, labor is becoming class-conscious in a considerable area. The craft union, which grew so sturdily under the leadership of Samuel Gompers, in its philosophy was essentially not class-conscious. Its ideals were socially reactionary from the Marxian standpoint. The appearance of the class-conscious I. W. W. just before the outbreak of the World War, and its flashes of activity during the war, were negligible in the total of labor disturbances and outbreaks in the second and third decades of the century. But the appearance of the vertical union, Mr. Lewis's CIO, is

a new thing, a labor organization with a class-conscious background.

Moreover, the labor vote in the election of 1936 for the first time was cast solidly for a President and a Congress. Labor claimed naturally to have captured Washington. Not the kind of labor that hopes to rise from the craft union to a foremanship and from a foremanship to a superintendency and from a superintendency to a place in the front office. The labor solidarity that helped to win the election of 1936 for Mr. Roosevelt, the labor which contributed nearly half a million dollars to the Democratic campaign, is not bringing its hat in its hand and pulling a forelock when it enters the front office of the factory. It is not looking around to spot the chair it soon will warm. The labor that was one of the six powerful and more or less antagonistic minorities which produced the Democratic vote in 1936 was for the moment class-conscious to the core so far as leadership is concerned. It has revived the public-be-damned attitude of the elder Vanderbilt. The middle class has been able to tolerate the public-be-damned attitude from its plutocrats who were merely spoiled children. But the middle class is batting surprised and even troubled eyes when it is damned nonchalantly by the proletariat.

II

Now if other evidences were needed to convince thoughtful Americans in the middle class that they are in some jeopardy, they should be warned by the appearance in the last twenty years of a distinctly proletarian literature in their country, the first appearance of that phenomenon. Fifty years ago James L. Ford wrote a skit in which he represented Richard Watson Gilder, the editor of the *Century Magazine* in the heyday of its glossy-collared, black-tied, derby-hatted, frock-coated

respectability. Mr. Gilder in Ford's sketch was standing on Fourteenth Street looking south across the literary *trocha* (a word which meant barbwire entanglement) and was pondering upon the vast treasure house of unused literary material in the slums below Fourteenth Street. To his amazement and alarm he was hailed by a denizen across the entanglement who pointed out the need in our literature of just that wealth of literary riches in the life south of the trocha. Mr. Gilder is represented by Ford as losing his poise. In the language of his literary interlocutor, 'he trun up bote hands!'

Mr. Gilder has passed, and American magazines and publishers of his class have put down their hands. They have opened their doors to the proletarian writers below Fourteenth Street and all across the land. Moreover, their writers do not confine their outgivings to fiction. They have produced a distinct American proletarian philosophy, — an American proletarian dialectic, if you will, — a premise which assumes that the old American scheme of things, and particularly the middle-class scheme of things, its ideas, its economy, its philosophy, are basically false and must be not merely changed, not just converted into something better and more equitable, but utterly wiped out. If Mr. Gilder in his bowler hat, his Ascot tie and wing collar, spats, cane, and drooping moustache, could read the proletarian literature of to-day, he would put down his hands and turn up his toes. It would paralyze him with its violence.

This year three significant books have been written as though to order, setting forth with clarity, courage, and with more than passing tolerance for the middle-class point of view, the social, economic, and political implications of the struggle in American life which amounts, for the moment, to a challenge to the middle class. These books, by some pleasant coincidence,

present three different points of view, three approaches to what must be inevitably the changing status of the American middle class. It must change, if something more devastating does not happen to it.

In *Middletown in Transition*, by Robert and Helen Lynd, we find the average Midwestern American industrial country town. Here for a hundred years the middle class has ruled. It has taken economic leadership because it has had access to capital. It has bought and owned the tools of trade. It has maintained its political rule by dividing its adversaries in the working class. This has not been consciously done. The establishment of the American two-party system has made a natural political division. Somewhat this division also cuts through the middle class. But until 1932 the political division of the middle class has represented no more class-consciousness than that of the workers. In 1932 the middle class began to shift into the Republican Party, the workers into the Democratic Party, and at the same time the Negro, who had been traditionally Republican, left the party which was proud to boast that it had struck the shackles off four million slaves.

Socially, the middle class has dominated Middletown because the middle class was the largest supporter of social institutions — the church, the college, the welfare organizations, the Chamber of Commerce, and the various community benevolences, 'drives,' and organized endeavors which attract community support. Since the depression, this dominance of the middle class has not seriously been shaken in the American country town — meaning by 'country town' any community between five thousand and a hundred thousand where people are fairly well settled, where a considerable minority of the inhabitants has lived for two generations and an elite minority has lived

for three. The older families form the bulwarks of business and politics, and man the social breastworks. The middle class in this typical country town lives on an income between two thousand and twenty thousand dollars a year. The holder of any income higher than that, whether earned or inherited, begins to put on airs of plutocracy and is of less consequence by reason of his pride.

The authors of *Middletown in Transition* have made an authentic picture of their subject. Studying the features of the portrait, we see but slight modification from the lineaments of the old American type. Its virtues are thrift, diligence, reasonable honesty, as much tolerance as the times will permit, much more knowledge than understanding, and a keen eye for the main chance — the Puritan virtues. The middle class in this community elects the sheriff, controls the police, has access to the governor, who is the head of the state militia; and in any contest with any foe, social, economic, or political, the middle class will have the tremendous advantage of the first call upon the forces of law and order. So the middle class stands for law and order as the first thing to be desired in any moment of crisis or calamity.

This typical Midwestern industrial town, which is certainly the fortress of the ruling classes, is strong enough to dominate every state between the Alleghenies and the Pacific Coast. Not more than a dozen cities in that area are large enough to produce the urban type of civilization in which the middle class is not in control of the police, in which the middle class has no idea who is sheriff and must approach the governor politely through the city boss, who might easily turn radical if votes were on the radical side. Then he might easily be convinced he might profitably betray the money side of any social, political, or economic disturbance.

III

It is urban America which has called forth *American City: A Rank-and-File History*, by Charles Rumford Walker. The American social, economic, and political scene changes quickly from the country town to the city, and a town becomes a city in America when it has attained somewhere between two and three hundred thousand population. In the city the boss rules. The boss is generally supplied with money by seekers of special privilege in the city who live in the beautiful suburbs, who control the banks, the public utilities, the industries of the place and of the region, and who form a small class-conscious group which might as well be frankly called the American plutocracy. It is not a hereditary class, but it nevertheless is a distinct group. It rules. Its money oils the political machine of the local city bosses. The political machine protects crime as far as it dares, looks after the poor in trouble, whether with the police or with the new Federal agencies that distribute work and food. This machine gives just enough to the middle class in the way of public improvements, boulevards, parks, health service, schools, traffic rules, residential zoning ordinances, pure and abundant water, reasonably low utility rates, and a plug-hat façade of respectability in the outer walls of the city hall, to keep the middle class in bounds. Speaking rather broadly, the governing classes in the American city buy the middle class with the largesse of their own taxes and fool the proletariat with benevolences — throwing in a demagogue occasionally when needed to quiet the workers' unrest.

The story of this particular American city which Mr. Walker tells is the story of the twin cities of St. Paul and Minneapolis. The time of the story is from 1933 to 1936. The social locale of the story is the working class in a series of

major strikes. The point of the story is that the workers in our cities are beginning to be class-conscious. America is developing a proletariat. That word produces blood pressure in the upper and middle classes. American class-consciousness as developed in our larger cities is not necessarily, not even generally, communistic. It is not inevitably permanent. It is mildly socialistic, but not much more socialistic than either of the two Roosevelts and most of the progressive leaders of the last three decades, from La Follette and the first Roosevelt down to George Norris and Maury Maverick.

The interesting thing about the new alignment in American cities is that sometimes the city government reveals the divided loyalty of the political boss. In the past five years the boss frequently has been amenable to the workers. Always the boss has to take baksheesh from the plutocracy. Occasionally he has had to make embarrassing concessions to the proletariat in times of riot and disorder. So the poor fellow is accused of biting the hand that feeds him. But his choice is between the voters who carry the election for him, sometimes by crooked methods, and those who furnish the lubrication for his machine. In *American City* we see this conflict of interest between the political rulers of the city and those who once were its secret masters and still, in ordinary times, hold silent title to its governors. The story Mr. Walker tells so well is not a pleasant story, but Americans should know it. It will become more and more a typical story. The rise of the city in American life injects a new x into the equation of our civilization. In that x is certainly a challenge to the middle class.

Combined with national politics and the control of city government, that x in time will produce in the equation a new living standard for labor. American labor seems to be coming into a new

zone of self-respect. As a means to this self-respect, the organization of labor by industries rather than by crafts is doing something more than boosting the wages of the man at the bottom of the economic scale, the unskilled laborer. It is giving him a sense of solidarity with his fellow workers and with industry. He is stalking unabashed into the middle class. We who have been in the middle class on this continent for three hundred years will have to move over and make room. What the admission of another group will mean, no one knows. Probably not much in the way of denial to the present incumbents. There will be plenty to go around. The net of it will probably be a minimum standard of living, below which, by reason of old-age pensions, health insurance, minimum wages, the abolition of child labor, housing operated as a public utility, and various similar economic gadgets, no one who is willing and able to work will be permitted to fall. From this standard, if America remains democratic, — and there is no serious sign that America is deserting permanently the democracy of the Constitution, — any man will be allowed to rise and go up as far as his talents will take him, provided only that he gives genuine economic return for the rewards he takes.

IV

Which brings us to the third book in this series, Gilbert Seldes's *Mainland*. Mr. Seldes looks squarely at all that the Lynds see in *Middletown* and he does not flinch from what Mr. Walker reveals in his *American City*. But Mr. Seldes remembers and writes about something more than the industrial small town and the great urban metropolis. He adds to these the other four ninths — the farmer, the villager, the suburbanite. These additions complete the picture of America. Three more

comprehensive studies of American life could not be assembled in one season if one editor had waved his wand and published them in one volume.

Mr. Seldes sees America not as an evolutionary offshoot of Europe but as a sport in the social development of humanity. He sees us creating by the evolutionary process a new way of life — not merely higher standards of living for the masses, not merely universal education and free colleges and universities for the children of the worker as well as for those of the well-to-do. He sees us as a free people with freedom itself composing a considerable part of the actual difference in material things, with freedom and its material consequences affecting in turn the spiritual outlook of our people. He sees us as something new and strange on this planet, not merely as city dwellers in big and little towns, not as villagers or farmers, but as one people, moving incessantly up and down the economic scale with the generations, without static classes. He looks forward to an America that, for all our imperfections, — they are many and obvious, and he does not blink them, — shall still hold to the ancient ways. This America shall keep on living by Puritan first principles which, though modified by the exigencies of expanding civilization, were in the hearts of the men who first broke into this wilderness and later crossed the prairie and climbed the mountains and settled on the Western coast.

Mr. Seldes feels that three things are permanent in the American heart which neither the city man, the town dweller, the farmer, nor the suburbanite will ever give up: 'National independence, civil freedom, and private prosperity.' He feels that they are bound together, that they do not conflict, and are combined against all the powers which would attack any one of them.

V

Here are these three beautiful and useful books. Each of them is a sincere piece of work, done with scholarly patience and real intelligence. Taken together, they tell the American story of to-day. If there be prophecy, these books are prophetic of the America of to-morrow. They make it clear that the middle class is under a genuine challenge. If what these three authors say is true, a new status of our social organization is on the horizon for the next decade. Certainly it is due before the present century closes. It is easy to say there will be changes, but no one can say what changes will come.

The thing that is happening is that Americans are trying in their own way to socialize the machines man has made and is making. The Marxians let loose a dynamic idea in the world a hundred years ago when they declared that if everyone were at work there would be enough to supply everyone with everything. But the Marxian mistake was in assuming that men would click into proper jobs. They ignored in their scheme of things the social and industrial truth — that without paying a heavy price for superintendence everyone would not go to work making anything, and there would not be enough for all. The place of organizing brains in the distributive system and the reward for those brains set the problem for America in this century.

Already the worker at the machine is in revolt at its tyranny. He will not be mechanized spiritually or socially. The whole turmoil and clamor of industry to-day is the worker's cry against the rigid régime of the machine.

It would channel the worker's hours, rivet his spirit, and put his life on an assembly belt. He is demanding the individualism guaranteed to the middle class by our economic establishment — middle-class freedom, middle-class diversity of life, its right to culture, its access to beauty. The first thing the American industrial worker, and incidentally the American farmer, have to do is to convince their middle-class neighbors of the justice of their complaint and the fairness of their claims. When this case of the worker is established in the hearts of the middle classes, their ancient sense of right and fairness, their habit of righteousness and judgment, will make force unnecessary.

Public opinion may be depended upon to make just and even generous room for the workers. Mr. Seldes seems to feel that public opinion rises from the unexplorable spiritual forces that lie in the heart of American life. In the end they direct the course of our American civilization. These spiritual forces, which urge the glacially slow pace we keep in coming to our national verdicts and judgments in times of change and crisis, will control the decision in the struggle now pending between our plutocracy and our proletariat. Mr. Seldes clearly has faith that the righteousness that has exalted our nation for a century and a half will control the middle-class heart of America and give it power and wisdom to do full justice to the workers. As for the plutocracy, the problems it presents may easily be solved. We must not forget that our history shows this bitter irony in its commercial success: while the rich are growing richer, their brains are growing poorer.

DISCOVERY OF AMERICA

BY WALTER BROOKS

ONCE there was a sparrow named Hubert or Herbert, I don't know which. Let's call him Hubert. He used to spend his winters in Miami and then in the spring he and Enid his wife would come up to New York and open up their old nest, which was in a window embrasure of the Metropolitan Museum. They had done this for a good many years. From the nest they could look in on a small room full of paintings of the Dutch School — sixteenth century. Thus Enid, while she was sitting on her eggs, could look in and contemplate beauty, and Hubert felt that this probably had a good effect on the children. Also they both had cultural pretensions, and around the Museum they picked up a lot of snappy art talk that they used to good effect on their Florida acquaintances.

Well, one spring when they had almost reached New York, Enid said she wished they could go somewhere else that year. She said, 'I'm getting pretty sick of looking at those Dutch interiors.' 'Well, you know, dear,' said Hubert, 'what happened that year we went over to the Museum of Modern Art.' That had been two years before, when they had begun to feel that their point of view was getting to be too academic. Their nest had had a view of two Marins and a small Matisse. But that year two of their eggs did n't hatch at all and the other two produced fledglings so bizarrely marked and so

definitely subnormal that at migration time they had flown off north and had never been heard of again. 'Perhaps,' said Hubert, 'we might try the National Arts Club.' 'Oh dear, no,' said Enid. 'No, I mean something entirely different.' 'Well,' said Hubert, 'there are banks and clubs and patriotic organizations —' 'Fancy you getting patriotic!' said Enid. 'No, let's live in the country.'

Well, Hubert thought that would be nice, but he did n't want to say so right away, so he pished and tushed a bit, but finally gave in and sighed and said, 'Well, since you wish it, my dear. Though,' he said, 'I'm afraid the social life will not be very stimulating.' 'Rather primitive, no doubt,' said Enid, 'but we have become perhaps almost too sophisticated and I am sure we shall feel more sanely balanced after a summer among the simple kindly country folk.' 'True,' said Hubert. 'After all, New York is not America.'

So they flew on past New York and picked out a little white village called Æschylus Centre. And they built a nest in the eaves of a nice old house on the green and settled down in it and Enid laid an egg in it.

Well, so far they had n't had much time to get acquainted with their neighbors. But when they had been settled a week and nobody had come to call they began to think it was kind of funny. A pair of phœbes had the next

nest to them and around the corner lived a wren and his wife, and many other birds lived in the neighboring trees. They nodded politely to Enid and Hubert when they met them around town, but it never went any further than that. Enid laid three more eggs, and by and by, when she was n't going out any more, Hubert would say when he came home in the afternoon, 'Anybody call?' And she would say, 'No.' It was pretty discouraging.

But at last one day when he came home she said that the cat had called. 'Well, that was darn decent of him,' said Hubert. He did n't have much use for cats as a rule, but at least that was a beginning. And he said, 'Did you get out of him why people don't come to see us?' Enid said No — they'd just talked about the weather and things like that. But a few days later the cat came again when Hubert was there, so Hubert asked him point-blank if he knew what was the matter.

The cat was a little embarrassed and said Why, no — he did n't know of any reason. He said, 'Of course everybody knows you come from New York.' And Hubert said, 'Yes, I thought it might be that, but there is really no reason for any of them to be uncomfortable with us, for we wish to make no parade of our sophistication or of such cultural advantages as we may have had, but merely to take part in the village life. For,' he said, 'we are quite simple people really.' 'I am sure you are,' said the cat. 'What do you mean by that?' said Enid, and the cat said, 'Nothing — oh, nothing at all,' and then he hesitated a minute and said, 'But I feel that you are perhaps on the wrong track, for true sophistication can be only an advantage in any society, and the higher your culture the greater the esteem in which you will be held here as elsewhere.' 'I am glad to hear you say that,' said Hubert, and then he asked the cat how he thought it would

be if he were to give a little informal talk on some phase of art. 'For,' he said, 'I am in a sense connected with the Metropolitan Museum and I have studied the subject for many years.'

Well, the cat thought that would be all right. 'Only I should tell you,' he said, 'that there are four artists and one art critic in Æschylus Centre, so that there is not a bird in the village that has n't some knowledge of such matters.' 'That is fine,' said Hubert, 'for then I shall be assured of interest in my talk.' 'Yes,' said the cat doubtfully, 'but do make it as lively and anecdotal as possible. Remember, too, what Santayana says — that an artist may visit a museum, but only a pedant can live there.'

'Who in hell is Santayana?' said Hubert when he had gone. 'Oh, he just made it up,' said Enid. 'I don't think I like that cat as well as I did,' said Hubert. 'And who do you suppose the four artists are?' 'Probably old ladies that paint on china or do burnt wood,' said Enid. 'For if they were really any good they would n't stay in a little place like this.' 'Shall I give my talk on Art Treasures of the Nation that I gave in Miami last year?' said Hubert. 'No,' said Enid, 'I think something like Modern Trends in Art would be better. *Modern* always gets people who are n't up to date.'

Well, there was a bird bath in the garden, and the next day Hubert went down and hung around there and told all the birds that came to bathe that he was giving a little talk next Tuesday afternoon and he hoped they'd come. They had never said anything more than how-dy-do to him before, but they were very polite and said they hoped to be able to come. But they were n't as impressed as Hubert had expected and so he began to brag a little. He did n't brag much, but just enough to show that he could if he wanted to. And finally a peewee who

had been sitting on the edge of the pool for some time came over and said, 'I wish you'd tell me, Mr. Hubert — just where do you place Modigliani?' 'Modi — er — oh yes,' stammered Hubert. 'Well, I hope to cover that in my talk.' 'I do hope,' said a wren, 'that you will talk about Chirico and what you feel is his relation to the Surréalistes.' 'Too metaphysical — Chirico,' said a woodpecker. 'Oh, I don't think so,' said the wren, 'for just as compositions . . .' And they began to argue.

Well, poor Hubert. He was no fool, and he saw that he had stepped in right over his head. 'Gosh darn it, I got these birds all wrong,' he said to himself, 'for, my God, I don't even know the names of these artists, and what a monkey they'll make out of me if I try to give a talk on art!' The argument went on around him, and other birds joined in, and pretty soon they began to appeal to Hubert. Only they did it sort of with a sly smile, as if they did n't expect him to say anything. And at first he did n't say anything. Until a rather superior catbird looked down his beak at him and said, 'Mr. Hubert is reticent.' 'Yes,' said Hubert. 'Er — yes.' 'Yet, no doubt,' said the catbird, 'with his vast knowledge he could give us all the facts and settle the argument very easily.' 'Perhaps he feels,' said the wren, 'that *le secret d'ennuyer est de tout dire*.' 'An excellent maxim for any lecturer to keep in mind,' said the catbird.

Well, Hubert saw that he was being kidded, so he forced a smile and excused himself and went home and told Enid about it. And while he was talking the cat came along and he told him. 'Well, I tried to warn you,' said the cat. 'These birds out here have the edge on you.' 'Pooh! I can't believe it,' said Hubert. 'Why, with all our advantages —' 'Advantages my eye,' said the cat. 'Why, in all that dirt and rush

you're too busy picking up a living to do more than snatch at the last thing that's going on. Oh, I grant you you know that. You're all for fashion and keeping up to date, and if Anthony Eden's canary wears his tail feathers cocked at an angle of sixty degrees you all copy him. But these birds know the latest things too, only they don't take it so hard because they also know everything that has gone before and have time to talk about it all.' 'Well,' said Hubert doubtfully, 'perhaps I had just better stick to personal reminiscences in my talk.' 'I think that would be better,' said the cat.

So Hubert prepared his talk without much art in it and he gave it several times to Enid, who laughed and applauded in all the right places, and then about noon Tuesday he thought he'd better take a bath and brighten up his feathers before the lecture. He did n't feel like going down to the bird bath, which seemed pretty crowded anyway, so he flew over across the railroad tracks to the millpond. And he was giving his wing coverts a final tweak and polish when he heard band music.

Hubert flew back to the village and perched on the awning of Millspaugh's grocery between a flicker and the phoebe who lived next door to him, just as a band, with drums banging and banners flying, swung into Main Street. 'What's going on?' Hubert asked, and the flicker said, 'Opening of the baseball season. Æschylus Centre plays Southington to-day.' 'How quaint,' said Hubert. The band went by and then the fire company and then the local Legion Post, preceded by a carriage in which rode old Mr. Haggerty, the Centre's sole surviving G. A. R. veteran. And behind the legion came the two teams and then another band.

Hubert smiled a bored and kindly smile as the laughter and applause and cheering came down the street. And he began selecting the words in which he

would tell his Florida friends about this simply killing procession. All these peasants so solemn in their gay uniforms, and the whipped-up patriotism, and the beauty and the chivalry of Æschylus Centre so vulgarly parading to a ball ground. . . . 'That's Edgar Hopperson, the dramatic critic, playing the trombone,' said the phœbe, 'and you see that tall man driving the hose cart? That's George Wright, owner of the *New York Sentinel*. And next him is Lew Bishop. He's sort of the village idiot, but a wonderful hand with horses. And the fellow with the drum — he's Grierson, the banker.' 'Really?' said Hubert. 'What an extraordinary thing!' 'Why?' said the phœbe.

Before Hubert could think of an answer the second band, which was just below him, crashed into action. In spite of himself, an exultation which he had not felt since the first time he had tried his wings swept over Hubert. He fought it for a minute, and then in front of him a flag went snapping and rippling by, and suddenly he opened his beak and yelled at the top of his lungs, 'Hooray!' 'Atta boy, Hubie!' said the phœbe, clapping him on the back. 'I knew you had it in you somewhere. Come on — let's go to the game.'

So Hubert went to the ball game. At first he kept glancing uneasily over his shoulder to see if Enid was around anywhere. But pretty soon he forgot all about Enid, and when Æschylus Centre won, 12-11, he cheered until he was hoarse.

It was n't until he was almost home that he remembered his lecture. 'Great heavens!' he said as he lit on the edge of the nest, 'I forgot all about my talk! Were they terribly sore?' 'Nobody came,' said Enid. 'But Hubert, the most awful thing has happened!' 'Nobody came?' exclaimed Hubert. 'You mean there was n't any audience?'

'No,' said Enid, 'but what does that matter? Look at this!' And she moved aside to let him see the first chick that had hatched out.

'My God!' said Hubert, staring at him. 'Why, his head is on backwards!' 'Yes,' said Enid. 'Oh, I knew something terrible would happen if we came to the country!' 'Well, you wanted to come,' said Hubert. 'I did n't expect anything like this!' said his wife. 'Well, we'll just have to make the best of it and go back to New York. Another year here and goodness knows what we'd get.' 'Why, I know what we'd get,' said Hubert. 'They'd be completely turned backwards — not just their heads. And then,' he said, 'all parts of them — heads and feet — would be facing the same way, and in that case who's to say which direction is backwards, anyway?' 'Backwards?' said Enid. 'Why, that's so! They'd just turn around, would n't they?' 'No,' said Hubert; 'for they'd be facing the right way. We've been facing the wrong way, Enid.' 'Well,' said Enid, 'I do like the country. But if people won't visit us and won't come to your lectures —'

'Hello, Hubie,' said the phœbe, lighting on a near-by twig. 'Hello, Enid.' 'Why, hello,' said Enid, covering her strange offspring with her wing. 'Sorry we forgot all about your talk, Hubie,' said the phœbe, 'but maybe you'll give it to-morrow. We'll all come — really we will.' 'There is n't going to be any talk,' said Hubert. 'Why, Hubert!' said Enid. 'But of course he must,' said the phœbe. 'No,' said Hubert firmly. 'I guess I made a sort of discovery this afternoon. I used to think that New York was not America.' 'It's not,' said the phœbe. 'No, it's not,' said Hubert. 'Only I'd say it differently. I'd say — America's not New York.' 'Well, there's a subject for your lecture,' said the phœbe.

A LETTER FROM PERSEPOLIS

BY COURTLANDT CANBY

PERSEPOLIS is one of the great places of the earth; and for a chosen few it has been a place of pilgrimage, difficult of access but wonderful in the seeing, for three centuries. And even now it is a place to be seen by a far wider but still limited number of travelers. There is no doubt that some day, and that soon, when Persia has become quite 'opened up,' it will become as world-known as Athens and Rome.

The ruins are built on a vast terrace of Cyclopean blocks of stone, set up against a rocky ridge, and looking east across a wide plain to the usual bordering mountains of a Persian view. The terrace alone is a marvelous work, several hundred feet high at its highest, and approached from the plain by a tremendous double stairway, wide enough for an army to climb, and graded in small, easy steps. At the top of this, one comes out on to the terrace, far larger in area than it looks from the plain, and covered all the way back to the mountains with tremendous ruins. At the top of the stairway is the gatehouse of Xerxes, a great stone entrance way of four pillars (two now standing), and, looking out over the plain, two enormous winged bulls with their heads gone, but still impressively guarding this only ancient entrance to the enclosure. For originally the whole area was enclosed with a high mud-brick wall built on top of the terrace all the way around. It was a fortified palace area. There are two more great

winged creatures facing in toward the mountain, and these are human-headed demons — enormous, passive faces, expressionless, with their neat, symmetrically curled beards and hair and their stylized faces; they were made to stare blankly at the mountains for an eternity of time.

To the right is the Apodana, or audience hall of Darius and Xerxes, to me perhaps the most impressive of the buildings, and the one that has needed no excavation; has always been there and has been noted by the earliest travelers. It was a tremendous columned hall, perhaps open at the sides; and the thirteen columns of the original seventy or more alone show how awe-inspiring through sheer height this hall must have been. Slim, tapering columns they are, originally with lion-head and bull-head capitals, and all of them fluted. It is almost impossible to imagine a cedar roof high above, and stretching across, not thirteen columns, but seventy; and underneath this unnatural forest the Great King seated on his little throne, receiving his subjects and his vassals from all over the earth.

Still farther over and still to the front of the terrace are the royal palaces — Darius's, the smallest and best preserved, and Xerxes'; and finally the foundations of the uncompleted palace of one of the Artaxerxes'. The heavy doorways and window frames alone remain, the rest being of mud brick

and long since gone — but these stone gates and frames are set close together, and are massive, so that the outline of the palace can easily be seen. And inside each doorway there is a more than life-size bas-relief of the King walking through the doorway with his umbrella held over his head by a slave, just as he must have done many a time. Or he is shown fighting a lion; at grips with it, or sticking a dagger at rather close quarters into its stomach. There is a hunting tradition here as at Toq-i-Bostan; as in all Persian history, which has so many extraordinarily continuous threads. Probably the first palaces of the Medes were such halls of wooden columns, and certainly the first mosques in Persia after the Arab conquest were not domed buildings, but columned buildings — a forest of columns upholding a flat roof!

The palace of Xerxes is larger, and far more ruined, than that of Darius, but both are very similar, with their massive stone doorways — two thick side blocks, and a third across the top with a rather Egyptian flaring cornice to it — and the great figures sculptured on the two inside panels of each gateway. Behind the palaces, which are set up on terraces of their own, and in a depression between them and the mountain, lies the Harem, of which only one wing has been reconstructed by the expedition, and finally, filling up the space between the Apodana and the mountain, is the very much ruined Hall of a Hundred Columns, another audience hall and the largest of the buildings on the terrace. But it is harder to reconstruct this in imagination — all the columns are fallen, fallen all over one another in the vast enclosed space in a hopeless tangle of broken fluted drums and masonry. The north and south doorways have within them the King seated on a throne, and underneath it rows of little figures with hands raised, supporting the throne: the sub-

ject nations, each depicted accurately in its own costume and facial type (where the Arabs have left any faces), including the unmistakable Negro from upper Egypt.

Between the Apodana and the Hall of a Hundred Columns is a sunken court, excavated a few years ago by the expedition, and here on the double staircases leading up to the Apodana are carved the best friezes, the most impressive sculpture. On one side, on the face of the stairway, there are rows of subject nations bringing tribute to the Great King at New Year's, each group led by a Persian guard, and separated one from the other by a tree. The costumes, the facial types, the food and the clothes, and the sheep, camels, goats, chariots, weapons, that they bring are fascinating to study. And they march along in orderly rows, always in one direction, in a mounting crescendo, a continuously more and more hurried approach to something great, something omnipotent to which all things here lead. You follow along with them, slowly at first, then faster, until the last guard has passed, the last tribute bearer, and you feel that next must come the Great King, the focus of all this movement. But suddenly the procession is interrupted, not by the Great King, but by an inscription in three languages, one of those vaunting inscriptions of the Achæmenids: 'I am the King of Kings, son of a King, King over many nations . . .' So that not yet can you see the King — this is only his voice, his proclamation. The King of Kings is inside the great hall, under the columns, waiting for the nations of his earth to bring him the best of their lands.

The march is taken up again after the inscription by a long and orderly row of bearded, dignified spearmen, the famous Immortals, the great body-guard of the King, each standing erect with his spear before him, looking

ahead, indistinguishable from his fellows. With them come the officers, standing at ease, conversing as they wait their turn to enter the great hall, and above the Immortals servants carry the trappings of war of the King — his campstool, his horses, his chariot. And finally you walk up the wide staircase itself, and small, erect spearmen keep company with you, each placing a tiny foot on the step above you as you go higher and higher. One cannot enter the presence of the monarch of the world unguarded, unattended!

The top is nearly reached, the procession has been passed by — the tribute bearers with their varied costumes, the Immortals, the officers, standing and waiting. You alone have been allowed to pass. You alone are to enter the presence of the Monarch of Monarchs, with his royal son standing behind the chair and large incense burners sending streamers of hazy smoke up into the quiet depths of the great curtained hall, up to the brightly painted cedar roof far above; and below the slender columns the great King Xerxes, King of Kings, son of Darius, King of the Persians and the Medes and the other nations of the earth; Xerxes, the King who wasted his vast strength on the tiny land of Greece. The top of the steps has been reached, you turn to the left to enter the great hall — and there is a desolate grassy space, and broken pillars are tumbled in the grass, and alone against the sky some few battered columns stand precariously, and all around is a place of death, with only the dripping of the rain into a little pool collected under three broken, fluted column drums; and beyond, the white, staring entrances of the Great King's palace, each surrounded by its heavy black border, like snakes' eyes never closing.

Such are the sculptures, and such the processional climax. There are other stairways. There is another on a second

side of the same court — a long row of notables and officers standing at ease all the way up the staircase, conversing, holding hands, gesturing, waiting again to enter the Queen's palace. These are the most human, the most natural of the processions. And then there are two more staircases in a small court between the palace of Darius and that of Xerxes. Here servants bear food up the stairways into the palace; bread, pigskins of water just such as you see carried all over Persia to-day, goats and little lambs carried in the arms. The recently discovered little back stairway to the palace of Xerxes has the most perfectly preserved food-bearing procession — very small figures, neat and here brightly polished, the hard black stone smooth to the touch, and lustrous and perfect as the day it was finished. This was the way all the sculptures were originally. Here too, and on the other 'food-bearing' staircases, there are spearmen and guards on the outer wall, and always the same large, ferocious lion sinking his jaws greedily into the hind quarters of a stag at bay, in distress, with its head turned back over its shoulder, looking at the lion with terrified face.

The finest or at least best-preserved sculpture of all was uncovered a few months ago in the mud-brick structure set back toward the mountain, which they are now excavating. This section is tentatively called the 'administration building,' and on two sides of one of the largest chambers were set two great stone plaques of the King seated on his throne, with incense burner and courtiers in front of him, and soldiers, one with a magnificently carved sword scabbard, behind him. The figures are life-size or larger, and are perfect in every detail; and the hard black polish of the stone, preserved under the earth, is as fine as it ever was. These extraordinary finds at Persepolis leave too little to the imagination!

The friezes are beautifully precise, technically perfect work; but — and this seems to me to be true of all the bas-reliefs — they are not great sculpture, they are not really art. This came back to me when I saw, in the living room of the Harem, a superb fifth-century marble torso of a weeping woman, found in the so-called 'administration building' only a few months ago. It is Greek, and the best Greek — lovely drapery over a living, a real, an individual body. One glance at it showed me right away what these Persepolis sculptures really were: architectural ornament — beautifully executed, accurately conceived decorations, with little life and no individuality as sculpture. Practically every face, always in profile, is the same, and when they vary they run in distinct types. The same scenes will be repeated over and over again mechanically, the same in every detail. The

costumes, the beards, the faces of the figures will be finished with consummate craftsmanship, but there is no life to any figure anywhere on the terrace.

The supple curve of the woman's body underneath the drapery on that Greek fragment, strayed here somehow, suddenly unmasked the whole show; showed the stiffness, the stylization, the empty, uniform expressions on all these Persian faces of two thousand years ago. The same blank, carved face that stares eternally at the hills from the great winged bulls of the gateway is repeated a thousand times on every relief on the terrace. The clothes, the beards, the hair, even the shapes of the vases and the same thin, handsome mouths of the Persians of to-day, all are there, but the lives within died two thousand and more years ago — the souls were never there. Persepolis is indeed a place of death.

POLITICAL POWER

BY WENDELL L. WILLKIE

I

PROLONGED controversy on any subject is apt to engender such bitterness that fair and dispassionate consideration becomes extremely difficult. This is a truth that husbands and wives know well. On a larger panorama, history has frequently demonstrated it — as witness such random examples as the slave issue in 1860, the war debts in 1931, the responsibility of 'Wall Street' in the late depression. In their respective periods these important topics were discussed in a highly emotional atmosphere, and solutions found in such situations are apt to be more violent than thoughtful, more punitive than sane.

For nearly a decade now, the forum for the discussion of electric power has had the appearance of a battlefield, with the militant reformers, the public-ownership advocates, and the politicians engaging in a no-quarter combat with the utilities. Incidentally, one of the first guns fired was an article by Professor William Z. Ripley, entitled 'More Light! — And Power Too,' in the *Atlantic* for November 1926.

This was a vigorous exposé of the elaborate pyramids which certain financial promoters in the industry had built up for their own profit. It started a series of more or less violent criticisms of the industry, including a long seven-year investigation made and effectively publicized by the Federal Trade Commission.

By 1933 it was clear that the Admin-

istration was prepared to take drastic action against the utility industry. Upon his accession to office, President Roosevelt denounced the utilities in no uncertain terms. The Tennessee Valley Authority Act, putting the government in competition with private power companies, was passed in 1933. The Public Utility Act, containing the famous death sentence on utility holding companies and severely regulating all interstate utilities, was passed in the fall of 1935.

To-day there are not only forty-three state commissions regulating the public utilities within state borders; there are also fourteen Federal agencies concerned with power. Of these, the two most important *regulating* agencies are the Federal Power Commission, principally concerned with utility operations, and the Securities and Exchange Commission, principally concerned with utility holding companies and utility financing.

But that is not all. Several of these agencies — notably the Tennessee Valley Authority — represent government projects which are engaged, or will engage, in the generation and sale of electric power. These agencies are free from restriction and regulation by state or Federal commissions. Thus the utility industry, bound by a network of regulation, must compete with the government as an unregulated competitor of extraordinary wealth and power.

II

Through the Tennessee Valley Authority the government is launching its power programme principally in the five states of Tennessee, North Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, and Mississippi. Since the government has already constructed Boulder Dam on the Colorado River, and is constructing Bonneville and Grand Coulee on the Columbia, and since the President has asked for seven more regional authorities similar to the TVA, presumably the government will extend its campaign to cover the nation.

Like England's once famous military formation, the British Square, the TVA has had four fronts to present to the public, and it uses the front most suitable to the group which it is addressing. Before the courts it claims that it is not really a power enterprise, but primarily a *conservation* activity: it is a project to prevent floods, promote navigation on the Tennessee River, and check soil erosion in the great Tennessee Valley. Only before a more sympathetic audience is it frankly an instrument for the electrification of America.

This quadruple picture of the TVA has undoubtedly been helpful to it. The American people have been stirred by stories of what is happening to the soil in the great agricultural areas in the Middle West. Many thousands have seen the huge TVA dams with the water banked impressively behind them, and have seen green life returning to soil that was previously bleak and pitted. They have been told about the plans to make the river navigable, about the plans to prevent floods. They have naturally been as enthusiastic about these objectives as about the general idea of 'cheap power.'

The TVA has therefore appeared to be on the side of the angels in the controversy between it and the utilities. But the conservation programme of the

TVA is only a masquerade. It has no functional connection with the power programme of the Authority, and the amount spent on it is only an insignificant portion of the Authority's total expenditures. Other departments of government, both state and national, are charged with the duty of caring for soil erosion and are doing such work effectively without the building of dams and power facilities. The TVA dams are obviously useless for soil erosion. And if they were really designed for navigation and flood control, then the government has seldom engaged in a more wasteful and less effective operation. The TVA plan calls for constructing eleven dams at a present estimate of \$520,600,000. On the basis of such information as has been given in committee hearings, it appears that about \$190,000,000 of this will be allocated to power facilities. The difference — \$330,600,000 — is apparently for navigation and flood control.

But the Army engineers had reported (House Document 328, March 4, 1930) that for the purposes of navigation low-head dams could have been built on the river, with the same size and depth of locks, at a cost of \$74,709,000. This would leave a remainder of \$255,891,000 for flood control. The engineers also estimated that the average annual loss from floods on the Tennessee River was about \$981,000. Thus the expenditure for flood control would be about 250 times the average annual loss from floods.

These conclusions have been quite disturbing to the Directors of the TVA. In testimony before committees of Congress, they have questioned the conclusions of the Army engineering corps, which is considered by many the ablest engineering group in the country and particularly expert on the subject of inland waterways.

Obviously, also, flood control could not have been the principal purpose of

the TVA, since a flood-control system would call for empty reservoirs having no power value, while the apparent plan is to fill a portion of the reservoir at certain times of the year, although damaging floods may occur in any month of the year. These obvious facts were recognized when the Miami, Ohio, Conservancy flood-control dams were built by Dr. Arthur E. Morgan. There is a large plaque on these dams which reads: —

THE DAMS
OF THE MIAMI CONSERVANCY DISTRICT ARE FOR
FLOOD PREVENTION PURPOSES
THEIR USE FOR POWER DEVELOPMENT
OR FOR STORAGE
WOULD BE A MENACE TO
THE CITIES BELOW

Outside of the courtroom, the advocates of the TVA have been less guarded in their statements. Mr. David E. Lilienthal in an address at Knoxville, Tennessee, on March 1, 1935, said: —

But there seems to be some inclination to forget that these dams are not being built for scenic effect. These millions of dollars are not being spent merely to increase business activity in this area. These dams are power dams. They are being built because they will produce electric power.

And it seems likely that no one of the three Directors would to-day deny that the generation and sale of power constitute a major function, if not *the* major function of the Tennessee Valley Authority.

Indeed, although the TVA is only at the beginning of its power operations, these already represent a considerable enterprise. At the present time the TVA transmission lines extend for 1300 miles and parallel and crisscross the lines of the private companies. They reach out into many of the principal markets. They are already serving 17 municipalities, 13 coöperatives, with 30,000 individual customers. The TVA

programme contemplates the building of eleven hydro plants. Three of these are completed, two more will be completed in 1939, and all by 1942. They will produce 5,780,000,000 kilowatt-hours per year, which is about one half the total present production of all the power facilities in the seven states in the Tennessee Valley.

The American people, therefore, are paying more than half a billion dollars for eleven dams, chiefly designed to supply power to one area. But this power, as will shortly be demonstrated, is to be supplied to this area at *less than cost*. In other words, the TVA will operate annually at a deficit, and these annual deficits must, of course, be paid for out of the pockets of the taxpayers.

III

The sponsors of the TVA maintained at the beginning that this vast programme was not designed to create a competitive power system, but to set up a yardstick by which the rates of the private companies could be judged. The yardstick idea was undoubtedly attractive, since, after all, the average consumer did not understand much about electric rates and had no way of personally checking their relative highness or lowness.

Unfortunately, the yardstick is rubber from the first inch to the last.

From the generation of power at the beginning to its distribution to the ultimate consumer at the end, the TVA enjoys privileges and exemptions which are denied to the private utility, which conceal the true cost of TVA power, and the cost of which come out of the pockets of you and me as taxpayers. These can be best illustrated by a direct comparison between the TVA and the Tennessee Electric Power Company, one of the typical companies in the Commonwealth and Southern System operating in that area.

The first advantage given to the TVA is exemption from practically all taxes. For the fiscal year ended June 30, 1936, the TVA paid only \$45,347 in taxes. The Tennessee Electric Power Company (with approximately the same capital investment) paid \$2,339,284 in taxes. Here is a difference in this item alone of \$2,293,937.

Let us turn to the item of depreciation. This is an expense, a cost of operation, just as much as labor and fuel. This cost to the Tennessee Company, fixed and determined by the Tennessee Railroad and Public Utilities Commission, amounts to \$1,260,000 per year. The books of the TVA, however, carry no item for depreciation.

The same is true with respect to interest charges. The Tennessee Company properties were built only in part with borrowed capital. During the twelve months ended June 30, 1936, this company paid interest and preferred dividends amounting to \$4,299,022. On the other hand, the property of the TVA is built entirely with borrowed capital. The United States Government is paying interest and will continue to pay interest on such borrowings. The TVA books, however, show no item to cover this interest. It got its property from the Federal Government, which in turn, of course, collected its money from the taxpayer.

With our comparison limited to the items of taxes, depreciation, and interest charges, the yardstick fails to be a fair comparison for the Tennessee Company by \$7,852,959 per year. This is twice the amount which the residential customers pay the company annually for all the electricity they use. It is 65 per cent of the entire electric sales of the company, including sales to power users and street lighting. Or, to put it in another way, the Tennessee Company, if given the same 'special arbitrary advantages' given the TVA, could sell electricity at rates much lower than

those the TVA has set up as the yardstick.

But these constitute only part of the subsidies. They have to do only with the operation of the TVA system, largely devoted to generation of the power at the plant and with transmission up to the point of distribution. It is the objective of the TVA to sell its power to municipalities and to get these municipalities to erect their own distribution systems. For this purpose the municipalities can obtain an outright grant of funds to an amount of 30 per cent to 45 per cent of the cost of the system. They can borrow the balance from the United States Government at a low rate of interest.

Curiously enough, the method by which the TVA pursues its ends — namely, duplication of facilities — has been condemned by all students of the power programme on whatever side of the line they may belong. Mr. David Lilienthal, one of the Directors of the TVA, has frankly acknowledged this method, stating, 'The Authority is under duty to acquire a market for its power. It is authorized to compete with existing utilities, and for this purpose is expressly empowered to erect duplicate facilities.'

But, with few exceptions, public-ownership men and utility executives both agree that duplication of a private system by a government power system is directly contrary to public interest and means higher rates paid by the consumer and higher taxes by the taxpayer. So generally accepted is this opinion that it should be necessary to quote only from Mr. J. D. Ross, recently appointed by President Roosevelt to the Securities and Exchange Commission and for some time superintendent of the municipal power plant in Seattle, Washington. In his report for 1935, Mr. Ross stated that as a result of competition between the city power plant and a private company,

'the cost of distribution, which is far the larger part of the total cost to serve, is doubled, while the revenue is cut in two. The customer must, in the end, pay the cost.'

Since the TVA is apparently selling its power at less than cost, it should say so. If people who live in New York City, for example, are to pay part of the electric bill of people who live in Corinth, Mississippi, the people in New York should know about it. Perhaps they will not object. On more than one occasion the American people as a whole have contributed, through taxes, to a development designed to serve only a limited area. Often that is socially desirable. But if we are to pay part of the electric light bills of the Tennessee Valley, the TVA should honestly tell us so.

Also, if the TVA is attempting to force the utilities into public ownership, it should employ means that will neither deceive nor injure the public and will not jeopardize the interests of utility investors. It should announce its intention and proceed, by condemnation proceedings duly instituted in the courts of the land, to take over utility properties with fair compensation to the owners. This is both the honest and the humane method of action. Also, it gives the people a fair chance to protest if they don't like the change; or if they are still skeptical of political management of a major industry; or if they are a little worried about adding to the national debt the twelve billion dollars necessary to replace the present private investment in the industry.

IV

As can be imagined, the utility companies operating in the Tennessee Valley have been helpless to meet the subsidized government competition which the TVA has presented. The first immediate effect is seen in their in-

ability to finance their capital requirements.

The problem of financing is a particularly serious matter for a utility company, because of two peculiar characteristics of the business. First, the utility company is 'required by law to supply service to anyone who applies for it. Second, it is limited by law in the rates it can charge and, therefore, in the amount of revenue it can receive. These two characteristics mean that a utility company cannot finance itself out of revenue — as the Ford Company has done with such conspicuous success, and as all great corporations are able to do in part. Also, it can never say, as other companies might say: 'We have grown large enough and we shall produce now for a limited market.'

In the utility business the property is continually expanding. It expands every time a new customer puts in his order. Whenever a utility man goes to his office, he knows that he will face a need that day for additional capital to meet new requirements for electric service.

Out of every dollar of revenue received by Commonwealth and Southern companies in the Southeast, they expend approximately 26½ cents for labor, 13½ cents for taxes, 39½ cents for borrowed capital, and 20½ cents for materials and supplies. Obviously, these companies should not reduce the wages they pay. They cannot reduce the taxes. They cannot control the present high costs of material and supplies. The only real economy they can achieve is to reduce the cost of capital. The competition of the TVA barred the utilities in that area from borrowing in the money market at the recent favorable rates — even though they had the same normal increase in business during the last three years that utilities elsewhere have had. If these Southeastern companies could

have refunded their senior securities on the same basis as that followed in 1936 by the Northern companies in the same system, they could have saved six million dollars a year in interest and preferred dividends. This is equal to 40 per cent of the entire amount they receive annually from their more than 430,000 domestic electric consumers in the South.

The utilities were therefore blocked from their principal opportunity to economize — namely, reduction of fixed charges. They have seen their customers taken away from them, the value of their property seriously impaired, and the interests of their stockholders unfairly injured. Against this they had only one immediate weapon — and that was the law. The utilities took to the courts. The companies in the Commonwealth and Southern System, of which I am president, were active among the nineteen operating utilities which sought an injunction against the TVA efforts to duplicate their lines and take away their markets.

We have been severely criticized for this, but I have no apology for it and believe that none is needed. It seems to me that responsible company executives had no other choice than to seek to preserve the property of their stockholders through every possible legal means. Various decisions have been rendered by the lower courts on the Tennessee Valley Authority Act, but since the cases have not yet reached the United States Supreme Court, the constitutionality of the act has still to be determined.¹ This delay has certainly not been the fault of the utilities, which have been more than anxious to have the issue settled. As Arthur Krock stated recently in the *New York Times*:

¹ In the so-called Ashwander Case, the Supreme Court merely decided that the generation and transmission of power from Wilson Dam was constitutional, but expressly refrained from giving any opinion as to the constitutionality of the act as a whole. — AUTHOR

Such delay as there has been in getting a forthright decision on general TVA power policy appears to be the fault of the government, which for months dodged a submission of the clear issue and has only recently shown interest in getting one.

As I have stated, I believe that the utility companies would have been neglecting their duty if they had failed to resort to the courts to protect their property. But I am under no delusion as to the value of litigation. Courts merely answer questions, but do not solve problems. The fundamental problem in this case is whether or not public ownership of the light and power industry is desirable.

V

As a rule the leaders in this government power programme have avoided the phrase 'public ownership,' which still has a harsh ring in many American ears. Occasionally, however, they have frankly indicated that this is the programme's objective. Clearly, that must be its result. Nor will it be helpful for business men to regard such a result instinctively with horror. It is just another way — to my mind, an inferior way — of doing the job.

But there is nothing sacred about private operation of business. The utilities have no God-given charter for existing. Provided that the government compensates for what it destroys (a provision which, unfortunately, we cannot take for granted), there is no reason why the government should not put the utility companies out of business if the people want the government to do so. The only question which the people are interested in — and this is the issue which bitterness has obscured — is: *What is the best way to generate and distribute electric power efficiently and economically?*

Amid the claims and counter-claims, amid the rabble-rousing on both sides,

amid the efforts to hide the government's power activities, amid the benign references to 'soil reclamation, navigation, and flood control,' let us keep an eye fixed upon this objective. It is of particular importance because electric power in a few years will be far more indispensable to our manner of living than now.

And it is important to us *now* because we are now determining the policy that shall govern this power in the future. We must make up our minds very quickly as to who shall own and operate our electric power systems — or else we shall wake up some morning in the not distant future and find that the decision has been made for us. It will then be too late to change — at least without great difficulty. The time to decide on the design for a house is before it is built.

Before the government stepped beligerently into the rôle of protector of the people against the power companies, the utility industry had accomplished a rather extraordinary job in America. Interruptions in power service in any community are very rare to-day, and it is significant that, amid the avalanche of criticism poured on the industry, few have had any complaints against its operating efficiency. Between 1913 and 1936, rates in the industry declined 46 per cent, while the cost of living, in general, increased about the same amount. Some 22,000,000 families and farms in America now have electric power at their service at an average cost of about \$34 per year, or a little more than 9 cents a day.

Certainly no one would deny that the job cannot be further improved. Utility men, when they are sure no one will overhear them, will occasionally admit that the punitive legislation by the government has spurred them to renewed efforts to lower their rates and put their houses in order. Of course the State Public Service Commissions

are supposed to keep a vigilant eye upon the utilities for just that purpose, but the glance of the Federal eye has augmented this optical influence.

Under public ownership, however, there is no one in authority to see that electric service is efficiently handled or to see that the voter is not deceived into thinking that his rates are low, when in reality he is paying for his electricity indirectly out of taxes. The weakness of government ownership was defined for all time in the statement made by Thomas Edison, as follows: —

There is far more danger in public monopoly than there is in private monopoly, for when the government goes into business it can always shift its losses to the taxpayers. If it goes into the power business, it can pretend to sell cheap power and then cover up its losses. The government never really goes into business, for it never makes ends meet, and that is the first requisite of business. It just mixes a little business with a lot of politics, and no one ever gets a chance to find out what is actually going on.

VI

In countries at all comparable to the United States the record of public ownership is not impressive. Of course, Sweden is frequently cited as an example of what public ownership can do in the light and power industry, but the comparison is of little value because the objects compared are so dissimilar. Sweden is a small, compact, homogeneous country, simple in political, social, and industrial structure. In size it would fit along this country's Atlantic Seaboard.

There are no large countries in which government ownership has finally demonstrated its efficiency on a large scale. Within the United States, government operation of the railroads during the World War was obviously a fiasco from which the railroads have recovered only after years of effort. That may

not be a fair illustration, however, since it took place in a war period, and had to be handled as an emergency matter. We have at hand a more apt exhibit in the Postal System, a government enterprise which is usually regarded with approval by public-ownership advocates.

As these last frequently point out, the mail in this country is delivered with reasonable promptness and reliability. Unfortunately for this record, however, the Post Office has been operated at a very considerable deficit ever since it was organized. Complete figures on the costs of the Post Office would have to be tracked down through a maze of government reports of all kinds, both legislative and executive; such figures are not given in the reports of the Post Office Department. But the 1936 report of the Department states that the *operating* deficit of the United States Post Office in the past one hundred years amounts to \$1,601,569,000.

That is simply the *operating* deficit. It does not include the enormous amounts of money spent on the capital investment in post offices — namely, the money spent for the purchase of land and for the construction of post-office buildings. These were all taken out of other appropriations and were, therefore, not charged against the Post Office Department — which is one of the ways whereby a government department achieves an apparent cost reduction. There were 13,730 post offices and 1501 classified stations and branches on June 30, 1936. There are no figures for the capital expenditures herein represented, but the total must be enormous and the fixed charges thereon would have to be added to the operating deficit mentioned above.

If a corporation similar to the American Telephone and Telegraph Company should take over the administration of the Post Office, it is my belief that we should have an even more efficient mail service, at present

rates, without any deficit at all. It is more than likely that the rates could be reduced. That, of course, is merely a personal opinion which cannot be proved. But the illustration gives rise to this very important question: Would we consider it to be efficient operation if the government were to run the light and power industry as it runs the Post Office?

Let us remember that the Postal System is still the chief source of political patronage and that postal officers have long been appointed on the basis of their party affiliations — despite the fact that every President within my memory has advocated that the merit system should be adopted. Aside from that, however, a business which operates at a loss — a loss which in the end must be paid by the taxpayer — is not a business that is efficiently and economically run. We may well ask ourselves the question, in considering public ownership, whether the power industry should be run in a business-like fashion or whether it should definitely be a Federal charity.

VII

If we decide that in view of these facts we do not want public ownership, what alternative is there to the present TVA programme? Three of the great dams have already been completed at enormous cost. Obviously we cannot tear them down, nor should we let this investment stay entirely idle. What constructive solution can the utilities offer which would save not only the nation's investment in these government properties, but also the people's investment in the utility industry? At the same time, what solution would best serve that objective which we laid down in this article as the real purpose of any power programme — namely, *the most economical and efficient generation and distribution of power?*

Beginning with 1935, the utilities have made several proposals, but to date they have all been either disregarded or rejected by the government. It was suggested, first, that if the TVA was to be an honest yardstick it should observe the same requirements as those imposed upon the private utilities. In other words, it should pay taxes at the same rate, keep uniform accounts, charge rates so as to produce a fair return, and file its rates with the State Commissions and the Federal Power Commission. This would seem to be a reasonable suggestion, but it did not meet with the approval of the TVA authorities.

In subsequent interviews with TVA and other governmental officials, the Commonwealth and Southern group of companies has made further suggestions, which can be summarized as follows:—

1. To purchase the power produced in the government plants and redistribute it at rates fixed by the Federal Power Commission.

2. To sell to the TVA all our systems in that territory at a price to be fixed either by negotiation or by condemnation proceedings in a court.

3. To enter into a pooling arrangement whereby both government and utilities would pool their power facilities, and these would be used on the most economical basis to fill public or private requirements.

So far not only have all the proposals been rejected, but no substitute proposal has been forthcoming from the other side. Last January, Dr. Arthur E. Morgan, head of the TVA, made a public statement which — although I disagreed with certain parts of it — was so fair in its approach that we hoped a solution was near at hand. While Dr. Morgan is in favor of public ownership,

he expressed his belief that the transition should be gradual and only undertaken in so far as experience justifies it. At the same time, he believed that duplication of facilities should be avoided, that public-ownership reports should be factual, and that government yardsticks should be honest. Deploring the bitterness of feeling between utilities and government power spokesmen, he uttered a plea for coöperation rather than violence, warning that 'the manner in which we achieve our ends may have a more enduring influence on the country than the ends we may achieve.'

The utility industry is naturally opposed to public ownership, but it cannot quarrel with so reasonable an approach to the question. Unfortunately, no echo of Dr. Morgan's statement has been heard in other government quarters. Official tongues still lash the utilities and recommend no compromise. The President has discontinued his power conference. The TVA is vigorously expanding its competitive power activities. Seven other TVA's are in process of preparation. As the utilities read the signs, the energies of the government seem to be dedicated to battle rather than peaceful negotiation.

But if that reading is correct, then it is surely the duty of a sovereign government to announce its intentions. The utilities have a right to know, officially and not by guess, exactly what the government plans to do with them. That includes their quarter of a million employees and their four or five million investors. And the American people have the right to consider these plans in advance and to determine whether or not their execution is desirable.

In the September issue Dr. Arthur E. Morgan, Director of the TVA, will present his conclusions about public ownership of the utility industry. — THE EDITORS

WRITING—A RETROSPECT

BY WINIFRED KIRKLAND

I

AFTER some hesitation, I have decided that my being consistently a worst seller for forty years does not, after all, invalidate my opinions and experiences of writing as a profession. Until this moment I have been too absorbed to stop and look back.

The first thing I realize is that writing was nothing that either my family or I expected of me. From the moment my mother first held me in her arms, she wished me to be an astronomer, like Maria Mitchell. She never quite got over her disappointment, although, when she went from us, there stood in a row on the top of her desk a dozen books, all mine. I look at them sometimes, at their backs one after another, and I think, 'Did I ever in one lifetime cover all that paper with all that ink? And did good publishers really publish me, as their imprint affirms?' Mother used to take down these volumes and read them, for hours. But I myself never open them. For how could anyone be anything but bored by the books one had written? It was only the books I had not yet written that ever excited me. They still do!

In my little-girl years, and in my teens and first twenties, I was too busy taking in to have any desire to give out. I do not know very much about how other writers have come to be dominated by their art. I often feel that it would be helpful if we did tell each other a little more about our own cre-

ative processes, irrespective of the fame or the obscurity of our achievement. I can only look back, actually for the first time, at the development of that one writer I know best.

As a little girl, then, — say from eight to twelve, — I recall myself as dwelling for hours at a stretch in a world apart, gladly under a spell, whispering over and over bits of 'Hiawatha' or Macaulay's *Lays*, or letting my inner eye picture to the last detail the green water and white sea sands where dwelt Andersen's Little Mermaid. Just as vividly I remember sitting motionless and remote, gazing at a blue mountain line against the sky. At the same time there was another side of me, very different and yet as enjoyable as my speed at tag. I loved nothing more than tearing sentences to pieces. I was twelve when that ancient and honorable textbook, Kellogg's *English Grammar*, entered my life — page after page after page of delectable diagrams! It would have been hard to determine which I liked more, to find a far-off secret corner where I might declaim 'The High Tide on the Coast of Lincolnshire' all by myself, or to take a page of newspaper prose and shred each sentence into bits and make a black-lined draft of its structure. Not until many years later did these two leading leanings of mine, toward poetry on the one side and toward analysis on the other, coalesce to form a single entity.

I am not sure that even now they have become altogether one, or ever will, for even while I am engaged in building an article, bit by bit, according to a rigid plan, it is my secret ambition to conceal that plan under a shimmer of phrases adroitly interwoven, and I still put myself to sleep by repeating verses from Walter de la Mare or Ralph Hodgson, yielding to them because their magic utterly eludes dissection.

My delight in structure came in handy when I found myself beginning Latin grammar, which appeared to me much easier and more logical than English. Having earlier routed the latter with Kellogg's aid, I found nothing arduous about Latin, though I can now understand the exasperation of young classmates that any normal teen-age girl should go rooting around for alluring undiscovered rules in the footnotes. My predilection for analysis received fresh reinforcement about this time. I found myself abruptly placed in a large city school—a shy country child, feeling more uncouth, I hope, than I appeared. There were a thousand girls in that school and a hundred of them in the class where I was seated. English composition was imparted to us by an austere instructor, slim, vigorous, fifty. I was fourteen. I can still recall the painful start with which we all came to attention when for the first time in our lives we were addressed as 'Ladies!'

As had happened with Kellogg's *English Grammar*, I was to receive a definite influence for my future writing. The method for all of us was simple, but absolutely inescapable. On one Monday we laid upon our teacher's desk an outline of our composition to come, all reduced to capital A's and B's, with little *a*'s and *b*'s beneath, and Roman and Arabic numerals intelligently sprinkled about. This sheet was in a few days returned, annotated and commented on. On the framework thus

revised we then constructed the complete composition for the following Monday. It was a procedure that became built into my writing processes—outline first, then article, story, or book erected on that scaffolding. Hardly a dozen times have I deviated from this course, and when I have thrown my early training to the winds and jumped into my message without a chart I have always had reason to repent bitterly.

II

Not then, nor until four or five years later, did I have any idea of making writing a goal in itself. It would, of course, become a vehicle for the classical studies in which I had become utterly immersed in school and college. I was walking the Athenian streets with Socrates, I was looking over Juvenal's shoulder at the wicked thoroughfares of Rome, too preoccupied with Latin and Greek to bring my dreams nearer home and actually envisage myself as giving my soul to the writing of English.

But those years with the Greeks have had their aftermath. The vision of clear columns rising against the sky, the impact upon my mind of thoughts rising clear against this world's eternal chaos, have made me overcritical of certain modern forms and tendencies. For example, I am often completely floored by the prize poems of to-day. Because I was Greek for years in my youth, I now want to cry alike to editor and author of these literary exhibitions, 'For Heaven's sake, man, what's the crime in being lucid? How am I to know whether it's your fault or mine that I have n't a notion what you're driving at?' Because I was Greek for so long I want to say to the poet, 'Why put yourself in such a pother to be unintelligible? If you have a thought, let her out! The chances are that it's not so big a thought as to do any dam-

age!' Because of the Greek that long ago got under my schoolgirl skin and permanently into my bones and marrow, I can't help feeling that there should be some connection between an artist and his public. If the poet shoots himself up into his own empyrean, regardless, he merely leaves his readers gaping after him, blinking at the spot where he disappeared. On the other hand, if he lets a poem hit us square between the eyes, it produces a much higher type of blinking.

I supposed I'd be a student of the classics and write a thesis and get a Ph. D., like all the rest. But I think my young Greek teacher, since then become well known, — Emily James Putnam, — must have discovered in me some tendencies of which I was myself hardly yet conscious, for I remember her giving me some advice that is worth passing on: 'Read Greek for work, and French for recreation, and you will insensibly form a taste for style that will dominate your writing without further care on your part.' As a matter of fact, I have not followed either of these suggestions, for as years went on the world of books, even the twin kingdoms of the ancient classics, grew less and less compelling. More and more insistently the real world all around me demanded my attention, until to-day all I want is to look and look, and then to write and write what I see. But it was some time, really, before I got that way.

Oddly enough, my first acute impulse toward writing came from teaching it. When I left college, the most obvious way to earn my living was to teach Latin, and out of that fact came a chain of experiences that was to bind me at last to writing as my profession. Along with Latin, I was also teaching English. The contrast in the response of my pupils was illuminating. No matter how conscientiously I prodded the corpse, Latin remained, for those growing girls, a dead language by which they refused

to be contaminated. Of course, the approach to the Roman tongue had been softened considerably in the decade since my own induction. In my halcyon adolescence we were first immersed in Latin grammar for three months, and then bayoneted at once into Cæsar, with no choice but to advance or perish. When I came to teach Latin, however, we stole on it softly, by means of a gentle little textbook so disarming as to be alarming, for how could you help being afraid of rules that had to be approached so surreptitiously? Latin both for my pupils and for me proved a bore, but those same pupils, the instant they entered their own home tongue, whether reading it or writing it, chirruped at once with joyous outpourings. We gamboled together, the girls and I. I forthwith resolved to teach English, and English only, and for six years I did, and loved it so well that almost I might be doing it still. Almost!

The sequence by which teaching English led to writing was quite natural. It was manifestly unfair to ask my pupils to do something I had not first done myself — like giving a cook a recipe for making bread instead of showing her with your own two hands. Presently I got so excited over my own recipes for writing before they were offered to my pupils that I began to question seriously which I really preferred, to teach other people to write or to write myself. I took a position that allowed me part time for my own writing, and so my indecision between the two courses got worse and worse year by year, until a watching friend rescued me. 'When you are teaching,' she asked, 'are n't you always wanting to stop and write?'

'Yes.'

'When you are writing, do you ever want to stop and teach?'

'Never!'

Thus encouraged, I cut loose from

the schoolroom and set out to be a free lance, but cannily, not until my earnings through writing had for three years equaled those through teaching. The road to a literary livelihood looked promising enough. But it was n't. It never has been. In this, my first retrospect, I see that disappointment should be the key word for a trail forty years long. If, looking back, I made a chart of this path, it would show recurrent peaks of hope, followed by sinking spells. Somehow I would always bob up again, no matter what happened. 'Next time!' I would say to myself. 'Next book!' And on I'd go.

III

Looking back, I perceive that the painful part of my course has not been failure, but half success. Almost invariably my books have gone to the first publisher to whom they were offered. Recurrent disappointment has been inevitable, because always I've expected the public to agree with the publisher. Sometimes I have flattered myself that the underlying cause is all that Greek that got into my system before I was twenty, and stayed there. If you've once been on fairly intimate terms with Sophocles, it's mighty hard ever to brace yourself to write for the pulps. Or perhaps the reason is prenatal — my mother's dream of a baby that should hitch its wagon to a star. Anyway I have never written a popular book, and as I attain the relentless insight of age I acknowledge at last that the real reason is that I did n't know how! But none of this is said in sorrow. I am old enough now to realize not only what I have *not* had from my chosen profession but also what I *have* had. For forty years I have pursued the most alluring art ever permitted to the human spirit! Destitute I have been sometimes, though always shrewdly reserving the price of a ticket

home, but in one luxury I have always indulged — I have always written the best I could. My best, obviously, has not been so very good, but I honestly think I've had my fun.

If disappointment has been the dominating emphasis of my career, I have to confess that at first it was certainly all my own fault. I failed because I had been born a bulldog, and I had to learn that to become a writer you have to be a great many other things in addition to being a bulldog. Perhaps the reaction from the necessary repressions of being a boarding-school teacher influenced my literary output at the start. At any rate, never before nor since has the more romantic side of my make-up asserted itself so violently. Little would anyone have dreamed that humor would ever become an element in my productions! I wrote story after story, allowing my fancy to race at will after tragedy wherever it could be found. I not only wrote such stories, but with bulldog persistence I sent them to editors for exactly two years by the clock. A manuscript paused in the village post office barely long enough to be stamped, then off I shipped it again. For exactly two years nobody accepted anything. My gentle ministerial father and my hobbledehoy brother, who brought the mail, were more sensitive than I. The envelopes were long and white and hard to conceal from the peering eyes of the parish.

Not because of family protests, however, did I suddenly desist, but because I met a wise lady who had herself once been a reader for the *Atlantic*. I wanted to write, did I? I did. Had it ever occurred to me to study a magazine before I bombarded it? I gazed at her in stupefaction, but she pressed her point. I'd study my market, would n't I, before dumping a load of cabbages on the store steps of a hardware merchant? I went home and opened the first

magazines handy, and examined them. Then I wrote again, and sent again. With my very first shots I brought down almost simultaneously the *Atlantic* and the *Youth's Companion*. Afterwards, jumping from one to the other necessitated lightning changes in style that sometimes produced weird effects in my conversation, so that I have known my friends to call from room to room, 'Come quick! Listen to her resting her English!'

Thus I became for some dozen or more years a writer of juvenile fiction and also a writer of essays, for the most part personal essays in which one is permitted to chuckle. The essays were more difficult to do than the stories, but more amusing for the author. I understood Rose Macaulay's glee over essay writing as recently expressed in *Personal Pleasures*. Yet there was to come a time when for a dozen years I never even thought of writing a personal essay — nor a *Youth's Companion* story, either, for that matter, but this for a different reason.

I wrote *Youth's Companion* tales by the dozen. I don't know what has become of them, for, as I said, it has always been very hard for me to look back at what I have written rather than forward to what I have not written. I might be producing juvenile stories still, but quite suddenly the *Youth's Companion* up and died on me! With it there passed, I think, a whole era of American history. As one of the last contributors called in for consultation and assistance, I was actually present at the demise. A sprightly young novelist had been entrusted with resuscitation measures, but his brief editorship was drawing to an unavoidable close. He had spent months, he told me, traveling up and down rural districts, searching for surviving subscribers to the *Youth's Companion*. Their names, he said, read like the list of inmates of an old ladies' home. Youth, he had dis-

covered, had long since ceased to associate with its *Companion*. Youth had changed its tastes considerably by the middle twenties of this century. At the first turn of its teens, youth now leaped at the many grown-up periodicals, which, in their turn, somewhat modified their contents to meet the need. (Have we ever heard that our average mentality is that of a thirteen-year-old?)

The decease of the *Youth's Companion* left me with a heap of unavailable manuscripts on hand. The only places I could find to send them were the church-school magazines of the various denominations, and since I have found only one denomination able to pay as much as a cent a word for my juvenile stories, of necessity I have stopped writing them. As a matter of fact, I could live on a cent a word if only I could keep well and write fast enough — but I never can. The departure of our most worthy weekly left me not only with unused manuscripts, but with an unusable method of presentation. From my earliest contribution I had been cautioned to consider alike the small boy's interest and his grandmother's. I never wrote a story for the *Companion* without first envisaging a typical family circle grouped about the sturdy Rochester burner on the table, infant in arms, ten-year-olds, father, mother, grandparents, while someone read aloud my story, and every single one of them registered avid enjoyment!

Perhaps trying to hit so many bull's-eyes at once is the reason I've never really taken to writing fiction; or perhaps it's because I've observed so many people doing it and doing it so poorly. I continue to be one of the few people in the world who have never written a novel, but I'm beginning to weaken. In six decades I've watched so many souls that surely I could invent a few, and pull a little string inside me to set them jigging. Always that call to the next book! William De

Morgan was older than I am — and Santayana.

For a few years I jogged along with the rest of the pleasant, unsuspecting world — mounting, witless step by step, the volcano. I wrote essays, mostly gay, and a few grown-up stories. One of them, I remember, landed in the *Atlantic* and another in *Scribner's*, but I did little fiction. Somehow my stories were not sufficiently objective; they tended to get essayish in the middle. Then the volcano broke loose. At first we did n't believe it, and for several years succeeded in living at least half our existence as if the war were n't there. Then at last we did believe it, and entered it, but even then we thought it was a good war, the war to end war. Yes, even I. I have a book to prove it. Sometimes I read the first half of *The New Death*, for that part I still hold true, but never the second half, in which I pictured the beautiful new world to be built on the blood of young soldiers. The *Atlantic* printed the first half condensed into an article, but only the closing sentence of the second half.

The New Death was a direct result of Armageddon. It occurred to me that a most interesting study, of book length probably, could be made of the kind of autobiography the war was producing — the memoirs of young soldiers, their letters and comments from the front. For the most part, memoirs had always been written in the security of old age looking back. There was a pitiful wealth of this new type of autobiography being published just then. I studied the records left by the newly dead on every front, Italian, German, French, English, American. These belonged, of course, to the beginning of the conflict, when the young idealists were being slaughtered — poets and painters and musicians and inventors. I wanted to garner and preserve what they had to say, about everything. I found they all had one concern, and that was

death. They all said the same things about death, almost in the same words sometimes. They all saw death as more beautiful than any of us had ever conceived, so when I came to write a book in which I should try to keep for us all some little of what the young men sacrificed were saying, I called the book *The New Death*.

IV

At that time I did not realize what had happened to my writing. Suddenly the real world had pushed in and possessed me. Little did I dream that never again was I to write a wholly light-hearted essay, or a romantic story. The contemporary had come crashing upon me with all its terrible questions: 'Look at me! Think about me! What have you to say now?' The immediate result was shell shock, although I never came nearer to the front than the mountains of North Carolina. There ensued a two-year breakdown of body, brain, and soul. The war did that to some of us who had lived half a lifetime believing war could never come again. Very slowly I came creeping back nearer to normal. Then like a bolt a book fell upon me, a book I must write, and at once. I had never before felt the writing impulse like that. I had chosen writing; writing had never before chosen me! From my first thought of it that book shook me as a mastiff might lift and shake a kitten. I have never felt so helpless, so choiceless! Why I, of all people — a book like that! While up to this time I had been more a believer than an agnostic, still I had not taken religion with overmuch intensity. Now I was possessed by a book of faith, which blazed and burned, shattering from head to footsole.

It had come upon me quite simply, too, at the start, before it changed into a thunderbolt. I was sitting by myself on a stone in a quiet pasture, ringed in the distance by blue mountains. A

question pushed to the foreground: 'What do you really think of all this thing called human life? What do you really believe about yourself, and other people, and God?' There on that green and golden mountain morning I wrote the creed that was to become the last two pages of my first religious book, the very last type of book that I had ever expected to write. There is no better method, I believe, than to write the last paragraphs of a book first; but afterward it needed a whole year to present the slow-growing reasons that for me had led to the brief articles of my personal belief. Though the title has since been changed, I called the book *Chaos and a Creed*.

When at the start I went to my doctor for advice, he looked me over with all a surgeon's keenness.

'Will it hurt me to write this book?' I asked.

'It will hurt you very much more not to!'

Somehow I survived the year that followed, but when the book was finished I had n't the courage to acknowledge its authorship, it was so different from anything any of my previous readers would have expected of me. Besides, that younger brother who had once begged me to give up those long white envelopes forever had developed into a clergyman, and now he besought me, 'Don't, oh, don't ever write of religion, for no man will accept theology from a woman!' Now I seriously question whether any woman has ever written of theology; but in writing about religion I protest that I'm following — with a long, long gap between us — Maude Royden, and E. Herman, and Evelyn Underhill. Still, I gave heed to my brother and decided to appear over a masculine pseudonym. *Chaos and a Creed*, by James Priceman, was entrusted to a friend as go-between and was promptly accepted by a leading New York publisher, without the au-

thor's identity being known. Of course I had to tell the secret when I signed the contract. Also I kept up the deception only for a year or so.

The publishers at the beginning were enthusiastic. I believed them, too, and actually for a few ecstatic months felt that perhaps somehow I had been pitched into success. I wandered through mountain woods picturing the great changes that might come to my life with a real book being really read, and just a little good warm cash in my pocket. Of course none of it happened. It never does, but at that time I was n't as inured to disappointment as I am now.

A pseudonym was a new experience, and had some unforeseen results. A critic gave *Chaos and a Creed* three columns in the *Independent*, and repeatedly called the author 'virile' and approved his 'knight-errantry.' Considering how hard I had fought for physical strength to write that book, it was rather nice to be called 'virile.' The book had been out only a few weeks when a letter in delicate handwriting trailed me all the way from New York to my mountain retreat. It read: —

DEAR MR. PRICEMAN,

Will you have luncheon with me next Sunday at one? I have read your book, *Chaos and a Creed*, and I should like to talk to you about it.

The letter was signed Robert Fulton Cutting. Just then I should not have been able to purchase shoes to put under a rich man's table, much less the ticket to New York. Years later the invitation was repeated and I was near enough to accept. Looking back to my memories of that gentlest of gentlemen, I am still as much impressed as I was at first by his confidence in the craft to which I belong. Even if someone had written a poem sublime as Heaven, and I had been dizzy with admiration, still I'd never have invited any author to my home before I'd seen him!

V

For a few more misguided years I struggled on, trying to deal with a distant market. All my life I had been more afraid of living in New York than of any other form of existence. But there is always a thrill in rushing at the thing you are afraid of. The Southern mountains were too far from editors. I cut moorings, pulled up stakes, burned bridges, borrowed some money, and decided to live in New York as long as that money lasted. A new start at fifty-five I recommend as rejuvenating as long as you can hold the pace. Some of my old friends introduced me to new editors and publishers, and somehow I was able to hold on in the great city for some four years. I had to leave, though I had come to love it, not because I had exhausted New York, but because New York had exhausted me. However, I had remained long enough to reestablish the United States mail as a dependable method of approach to my market.

There have come to be throughout the last twelve years four religious books over my signature, but something has happened to the last one that will prevent any more, I am afraid. The second of these I did when I first went to New York, and it had the immense advantages of being addressed to a magazine audience and of being criticized in advance by a magazine editor. Quite casually I had left some random notes with the editor of the *Century*. When I went back he gazed at me, kindled and kindling.

'But don't you realize what you have given me here?'

I did n't.

'This is a modern woman's confession of faith, and I want it for my readers as fast as you can give it to me, in three articles of five thousand words each.'

Faced with necessity, I did the hardest job in concentrated expression

that I've ever accomplished — all my faith made readable to the man in the street in fifteen thousand words! The three months' serialization had the immense advantage that I could live on the proceeds of one chapter while I wrote the next. Also the three chapters, with one more added, had book publication speedily.

This second religious book was the occasion of an even greater disappointment than the first, but briefer, for peak of hope and depth of depression occurred within less than twenty hours. I freely acknowledge that nothing in all my writing life has ever made me so happy as when William Pierson Merrill chose my little book for one of his Sunday afternoon lectures. I sat flanked by two friends, and only their substantial presence prevented my floating right up to the vaulted rafters and on up through the roof. Dr. Merrill had had the whole service set to the spirit of my book — music, hymns, his own half-hour talk. The next morning I went flying to the publisher, still glowing from a night sleepless with joy. But there was no joy in my publisher. He looked at me in unrelieved despair; he said his agents were refusing even to offer the book any more.

'But,' I pleaded, 'is there no way of letting the public know what Dr. Merrill has said of it?'

'I do not know of any way,' he said with finality.

With equal finality I walked out of that office, and never walked in again.

Then came my third book of religion. About this I have never stopped to ascertain whether or not I have been disappointed. The book was written — that is all that counts. For years I had wanted to write it, until in the end I was half crazed with the longing. One recognizes the symptoms of a book that demands inexorably to be born, and that tears you to pieces until you have secured the prospect of a year's free-

dom to write it. I found at last a quiet spot, a room hung twenty-one stories above the East River. That room was a trifle larger than an English walnut, but it had a window big as all the world. In the light of that window I wrote at last the book which, longer suppressed, would have killed me. For years it had been pushing, all growing out of one sentence which had flashed upon me as embodying all I had come to think about the most mysteriously interesting man in human history. That sentence is, 'For thirty years nobody dreamed that Jesus of Nazareth was divine.' Looking back upon the road of forty years, I perceive that I have written only one book that satisfied me, and this because I did not seem to write it — it seemed to write itself.

Gazing back, I find myself tossed to one side or the other in my appraisal, just as I actually was in the climbing. Dollars and cents, do they matter? Yes, they do matter, grimly, for one must eat. But does n't it matter equally, that hour last spring with Rufus Jones, or that other hour farther back, but still luminous, when Robert Norwood, whom I had never met, welcomed me to his study, that rich wainscoted haven in the heart of whirling New York? My astonished ears heard him saying, 'I have read everything you have ever written,' and then, 'I think that you and I behold the Galilean eye to eye.'

Since I have actually written the book I most wanted to write, I shall turn more gayly to new fields, from the field now closed to me. You see I really thought my fourth and last religious book might succeed, because, being frankly autobiographic, it could n't escape being humorous in spots. I also hoped it stated clearly what has always been my sole motive in writing of that singularly unpopular subject, religion. I have never set out to convert, but only humbly to explain why I am what

I am. But in writing of religion I have once again proved to myself my positive genius for unsuccess, for I manage to fall neatly between two stools. I feel precisely as some early Christians must have felt, those who did not spontaneously congregate in the catacombs, but had a large and delightful circle of friends among pagans. Suppose in that far-off ancient Rome somebody had found himself attracted by the Nazarene; he'd have wanted to explain to his amazed acquaintance. That's the way I feel, but the rigid methods by which religious books are published relegate me instantly to certain prescribed book lists and book counters which no pagan ever looks at. Consequently I land with church people only, those who have always accepted the faith I am trying to explain and have never thought it needed any explaining.

I am gazing now at the close of my religious-book era. It came to an end when I received the first report of the sale of my last book. Now it took me ten months to write that book; there were seven months between its acceptance and its publication, and another ten months from publication to payment — making twenty-seven months in all before any returns. According to the statement received, these returns will be \$178.80! In the face of these figures I must stop, for, though religious, I really am honest, and must endeavor to be self-supporting. So far I have had a most hospitable family, ready at any time to welcome home the aging prodigal who would persist in writing about religion. But I don't think it quite square to push that hospitality further. I really think I could write a novel if I tried, and luckily there is a publisher who is asking that I try. Thus, after forty years, there is upon me once more the spell of the next book.

IF ONLY —

BY ALBERT JAY NOCK

I

CONSIDERING the untold tons of garbage that are shot daily from our presses, it would be an intrepid person who should demand a new book on any subject. Nay, with books no longer the symbol of light and leading that they once were, but now become only a symbol of *was uns alle bündigt, das Gemeine*, no one with a literary conscience would ever so faintly suggest that another should be added to the list. Some years ago, I asked one of our ablest publishers how he got books out of his authors. He said, 'I don't. On the contrary, I do everything in my power to keep them from writing books.' I have always treasured the memory of this publisher and honored him as a loyal friend, not only to literature, but also to me; for while I, poor sinner, have fallen from grace once or twice since then, his words have kept my lapses at a minimum.

How many of us wretched addicts, indeed, should such words put in the way of giving literature the very best service we could possibly render! One thinks of Thiers's profound remark to Count Walewski, who, not content with a career in diplomacy, vainly imagined he could write a good play. 'What possessed you to do it, Count?' said Thiers, on the first night. 'It is so hard to write a play in five acts; and it is so easy not to write a play in five acts.' How can temptation rear its head against this solid wisdom? Yet it does.

At the present moment, for example, now that this idea has occurred to me, I am tempted to make it the subject of a long essay, in the hope of touching the flinty hearts of publishers, editors, literary agents, and above all, the deceitful and desperately wicked people who organize literary competitions. But I forbear; though the impulse is almost overpowering, I shall resist it, for in the cause of righteousness one good example is worth a thousand precepts.

Again, things being as they are, one's literary conscience would not only stay one from suggesting a new book, but would also admonish one to go very gingerly about recommending a new book to the attention of any public, large or small, general or special. With the noisy vogue of bad taste and vulgarity everywhere rampant, the public is deafened to every voice that is not pitched in the shrill falsetto of utter self-abandonment, and hence the sober appraisal of a new book may easily be taken as its proverbial damning with faint praise. Then, too, even in recommending a serious book to a very small and special public, as I have twice lately ventured to do, one is uncomfortably conscious of Emerson's sound principle of never reading any book, no matter what, that is not at least a year old. Of contemporary literature, indeed, even serious literature, one can hardly read too little — *man lese nicht*

die mitstrebende, mitwirkende, said Goethe — and almost invariably the mere passage of time discloses any contemporary critical estimate of it as worthless.

But though one may not ask for a new book or even recommend one, I suppose one is still free to say what sort of new book one would most enjoy reading. I imagine one might permit oneself to do this, provided it were done on the clear understanding that one had nothing in view beyond the indulgence of a harmless whim. I hope so, at any rate, for I have long had such a book in mind, and now, having made manifest the spotless purity of my intentions, I should like to say something about it.

II

It would give me a deal of pleasure to read a historical essay that followed out two lines of speculation, one of which I am quite sure has never been explored at all, and the other only a little way. History is notoriously a chapter of accidents, and historians have often entertained themselves by speculating on the probable changes in the course of events if this-or-that accident had not happened precisely when and as it did. If, for example, an unknown soldier's bullet had not pierced the breast of James Wolfe, on the Plains of Abraham, would George Washington ever have been the leader of a successful revolution? If Napoleon had not been laid up with a bad cold in the head, would he have shown better strategy at Borodino, demolished the Russian army, and turned the campaign of 1812 into a brilliant success which might have altered the whole course of subsequent European history? Speculation on accidents of this order is common enough. There are, however, two extremely commonplace types of accident which I believe have never been properly considered in their historical aspect;

that is to say, I have never seen more than a bare hint of any speculations concerning the probable course that history would have taken if in certain given instances such accidents had not intervened.

Hence I should be delighted to read an essay which considered, first, the accident of individual poverty from the historical point of view. Twenty-five or thirty years ago I applied myself to a long study of the works of Henry George, which led me in turn to look closely into the circumstances of his public career and private life, and into the fortunes of what is commonly known as the 'single-tax movement,' which was launched into American politics towards the turn of the last century. I wondered then, and have wondered ever since, whether George would have consented to put himself and his philosophy at the service of an Adullamite political jihad if he had not been always so miserably poor. It seems most unlikely. His instinct was strongly against doing anything of the kind, and the cast of his mind was so eminently philosophic that one might expect him to have regarded the politics of America as Socrates regarded the politics of Athens — as something, that is, for a really sound politician to keep as far as possible away from. Instead, however, of concentrating his energies on remaining a man of thought, he divided them, and became in great part a man of action. One might make out a good case for the thesis that the corrosive action of poverty inflamed a naturally ardent and nobly sympathetic temperament to the point of making him peculiarly accessible to the urgings of what Mr. H. G. Wells calls the Gawdsaker — to the point where immediate action, even ill-considered action, in behalf of those as poor as himself seemed a paramount duty.

This being so, it is interesting to speculate upon the historical position

that George and his economic philosophy might even now occupy if the determining factor of poverty had not been present. Indeed, a thoughtful person might find that the principal effect of a close survey of this remarkable man's public career is to make one wonder what his influence would amount to at the present time if he had not been so poor.

Similarly an essayist might find a first-rate exercise for his imagination in trying to estimate the force of Napoleon's dire poverty as a factor in the fate of Europe. In all that has been written about Napoleon I doubt that this has been done. Even *War and Peace*, which sets the high mark probably forever as a masterly job of deflating and debunking a historical personage, leaves this factor out of account; yet it must have been considerable. Napoleon, as Count Tolstoy says, makes his first appearance in French history as 'a man of no convictions, no habits, no traditions, no name, not even a Frenchman'; moreover, he was dead broke, unsuccessful and despondent, an adventurer, offering his sword here and there, with no takers. The irregularities of his conduct in the French service caused him to be struck off the list of general officers, September 15, 1795; he was in disgrace. Nevertheless, the most extraordinary freaks of chance — a deadlock of partisan political forces, the puerile incompetence of his colleagues, the insignificance of his opponents — opened the way for a free exercise of 'his frenzy of self-adoration, his insolence in crime and his frankness in mendacity,' whereby his career was made.

Now, no doubt these opportunities lay open to any adventurer who happened to find himself on the spot at the moment, and if one had not been there, another might, and the consequences to Europe might have been quite the same. Napoleon certainly had no monopoly of

the very moderate amount of sagacity that was needed to perceive the prospect which these freaks of chance held out, and to profit by them. But that is not the point. The point is whether, for example, if his father, dying in 1785, had left him a good substantial income, Napoleon would have been on the spot when the moment came, or anywhere near it. One may reasonably doubt that he would. It is highly probable, almost certain, that the moment would have found him much more congenially employed elsewhere, very likely at home in Corsica; his previous history gives a distinct color to this supposition. I imagine that if he had chosen to stick to the practical side of military affairs, as seems most likely, he would have ended his days as a first-class competent artillery officer, high in the service; and if he had gone in for the theoretical side, he might have made himself another Clausewitz or Moltke. I believe that a disinterested examination of the matter would show that the basic reason why the disgraced Corsican adventurer, Napoléon Buonaparte, found himself on that particular spot at that particular moment was that practically all his adult life he had been poor and busted and looking for a job. Very probably, too, it was the sudden reaction from this condition that enhanced all the evil qualities in his nature and made them dominant, for this is what so regularly happens in such circumstances that its regularity has given rise to the common proverb concerning the risks of putting a beggar on horseback.

The essayist might have even more fun out of examining the career of Louis-Napoléon in the light of this idea. An anonymous writer of the last century says he knew Louis-Napoléon well for twenty-five years, and was almost certain that if he had not been so poor as he was, there would have been no Second Empire. A great deal

can be said for this view. Even granting that he would go back to France in 1848 and put himself up for the presidency of Lamartine's ramshackle Second Republic, one might find pretty good ground for believing that as a rich man he would have been content to stay in that position and do what he could with it, rather than incur the risks and animosities involved in disintegrating republican solidarity and honeycombing the Legislative Assembly of 1849, in preparation for a *coup d'État*. But the more one considers the state of French politics ensuing upon the fall of the July monarchy, the less reason one sees why, if Louis-Napoléon had not been poor as Job's turkey, he would have dreamed of going back to France at all.

I shall not anticipate the essayist by recounting the conditions, subjective and circumstantial, which make this seem probable. Suffice it to say that but for his hamstringing impecuniosity, Louis-Napoléon was doing extremely well where he was. Always a studious and reflective man, in spirit much more a philosopher and poet than an emperor, he might have lived on very pleasurably in London, developing his ideas on free trade in association with Richard Cobden and John Bright, and in correspondence with Enfantin, the Pèresires and Michel Chevalier. He might have written his projected history of Cæsar, continued his studies on the abolition of poverty, and no doubt made quite an impressive thing of his twin schemes for an international currency and for what would seem to be a very practicable sort of United States of Europe, based on the suppression of customs frontiers. English society had received him most favorably, putting its best resources at his disposal for the beguilement of his lighter moments; while for those still lighter, he had the devotion of the blonde Miss Howard, who appears to have made herself al-

ways entertaining and delightful — and there is some evidence that her rôle in the drama of his life in London carried several capable understudies as well. As far as one can see, the only 'out' in this excellent situation was his distressing poverty.

I believe one could draw up a highly plausible argument for the thesis that but for this one factor there would have been no Second Empire, and hence doubtless no calamitous messing about in Italian, Mexican and Oriental affairs; probably a satisfactory composition with Prince von Bismarck in the middle 'sixties, such as almost any bourgeois republic, however imbecile and venal, but alive to its own interest, might easily have arranged; indeed, Louis-Napoléon himself had two capital chances to arrange one, and flubbed them both. Above all, there would have been no Mlle. de Montijo, and hence no Wissembourg, Wörth, Spicheren, Sedan; and for the probable changes ensuing in English, German and Italian history, a whole volume of speculation would hardly be enough. As it stands, that history was determined by a skillfully pumped-up revival of the 'Napoleonic tradition,' and the primary spring of action behind that revival may well have been Louis-Napoléon's poverty. The various stories about his unshakable faith in his 'star' have very much the air of something put out after the fact; or, as the sinful would say, the air of being mostly hooley.

The anonymous author whom I mentioned a moment ago says that after witnessing two days of the revolution of 1848 he never read a word about any of the revolutionary movements that took place in France during the nineteenth century. It was enough for him, he says, to know that these movements were invariably led by men in want of five or ten thousand a year. My essayist might look into this matter a little;

my notion is that he would find plenty to reward him. It was the accepted understanding among those who were 'in the know' that Lamartine proclaimed the Second Republic for money. The great orator was at that time not only in his usual state of being flat broke, but also about \$70,000 in the red, and hounded by creditors. With a republican revolution under way, and a right smart chance of himself being president of the republic, he could get his debts paid; as in fact he did. He was somewhat a Daniel Webster of his time; and it is not unreasonable to suspect that his financial disabilities may have had a great deal to do with making him the fugleman of the shouts for a revolutionary republic.

The essayist might make similarly interesting finds among men who were prominent in the other upheavals that France went through after 1789. He could probably turn up something out of the White Terror of 1815, a good deal out of 1830, — Louis-Philippe never let himself or anyone else forget how desperately poor he had been; his preoccupation amounted almost to a mania, — more out of 1851, and he could fill a long chapter with a study of the needy political adventurers of 1870–1873, Gambetta, Favre, Jules Simon, and their fellow-strivers. While on this last period, too, he might digress for a moment to note a striking example of the effect of individual wealth upon the course of history. When the National Assembly met at Bordeaux in February 1871, it is almost a certainty that if the Orléans family had bestirred themselves in their own behalf, their dynasty would have been restored; which means that if this family had not been rich enough to keep out of the unwholesome prairie-dog's nest of French politics at that period, there would have been no Third Republic.

I have cited this century of French history only because it affords so many

conspicuous and consecutive examples of the kind of thing I mean, and not at all implying that my essayist could not find plenty elsewhere, for they are like the sands of the sea for multitude wherever politics exist. Plenty such he could find in our own history, without rattling any skeletons in our neighbors' closets. I have in mind one statesman who influenced the course of our political history most profoundly, whom beyond doubt poverty nudged into politics in the first instance, as the easiest way to keep his body and soul together. I would give his name, but that his memory is dear to many, and some of them might think I was going out of my way to disparage him.

III

My mention of Mlle. de Montijo, better known as the Empress Eugénie, appropriately introduces my essayist to his second line of research, which is a study of henpecking from the historical point of view. All of us who have maintained even the most formal and austere relations with the fair sex may be presumed to have a fairly clear theoretical idea of what henpecking is; some of us, unhappily, perhaps most of us, have got our knowledge of it at the hands of that harshest of pedagogues, experience. My dictionary defines henpecking as domineering by one's wife; but when one thinks of Mme. du Barry and Mme. de Montespan, when one thinks of grandmothers, mothers-in-law, maiden aunts, elder sisters and *Gott soll hüten* débutante daughters, this seems a very limited definition. One might put it more generally, I think, that henpecking is the habitual imposing of the female's will upon the male, whereby the male's disposition towards the matter at issue is overridden, and his will nullified.

The strategical methods employed in this exercise are very various, running

all the way from the hawklike possessiveness of Mme. Polosov, the tragic tears of Mme. Karenin and the freezing hauteur of Lady Dedlock, to the intransigence of Mrs. Raddle, the bickering of Mrs. Caudle and the strong-arm methods of Mrs. Proudie. Those who know more of such matters than I do tell me that by nature practically every woman has all these methods at immediate command, and is also gifted with an extremely fine tactical sense in the matter of their mobilization and deployment. I suppose I might add that my own desultory observations rather tend to bear out this view.

The anonymous friend of Louis-Napoléon, whom I mentioned a moment ago, says in the course of some observations on the Empress that no one has traced the effects of henpecking on the course of history, and he cites some instances in support of his statement. Nevertheless he is not quite right. The henpecked man has mostly been fair game for the Jerrolds and Gavarnis of the world, but the essayist and historian have also sometimes taken him quite seriously. One's real complaint is that they have not followed through on him, not given the factor of henpecking anywhere near all it is worth, not as a rule taken more than its immediate consequences into account; whereas its more remote consequences are often the most important. For example, in the cardinal instance of Jeanne Poisson's henpecking Louis XV into the Seven Years' War, they do not go beyond the immediate political consequences to France, usually stopping with the defeat at Rossbach, the loss of Canada and the extinction of French influence in India; whereas the really interesting thing about this bit of henpecking is what it did to Germany and the German spirit, and what might have befallen these if the lady's seductions had not worked.

Maria-Theresa, wishing to recover

Silesia, got together a group of nations in an alliance against Frederick the Great. To make this alliance strong enough, she had to get France into it; so she sent that strange creature, Prince von Kaunitz — albeit a first-class diplomat, though one hardly sees how he could be — over to Paris to labor with Louis XV. France had just come out of the war of the Austrian Succession with about as much to show for it as the United States got out of the war of 1914, and Louis felt towards this new proposal somewhat as Senator Johnson might feel towards a suggestion from the French Government that we should go over to Europe in force this summer and help exterminate Hitler. Von Kaunitz encountered a deaf ear and a marble heart; there was nothing doing; so he took the matter up with Louis's lady-friend, Jeanne Poisson d'Étioles, Marquise de Pompadour, and got results. It seems that old Frederick, who was nothing of a lady's man, regarded Jeanne's pretensions with blunt Prussian derision, and had lampooned her outrageously in some pretty salty verse — he could do that sort of thing rather well when he felt like it — and Jeanne looked upon Maria-Theresa's project as a providential chance to get even.

This was the prelude to the Seven Years' War, which left Prussia flat; it was only Elizabeth of Russia's death in 1762, and the immediate withdrawal of Peter III from the alliance, which enabled Frederick to win the war by the skin of his teeth. This victory, coupled with those of the two preceding wars, no doubt laid the foundation for the Germany of 1870-1914; but the preceding wars had also firmly consolidated the German spirit, the superb *Ernst der ins Ganze geht* which the domestic policies of Frederick and his father had liberated and fostered, and which was to make the later Germany the most highly civilized nation of

Europe. As far as this consolidation was concerned, the Seven Years' War was superfluous and useless; and as far as the development of those policies was concerned, it was mischievous and retarding, for all the power and resource of the German *Geist*, which might have been so fruitfully employed otherwise, had to be concentrated on the problem of sheer physical recovery from the terrible blows which had well-nigh scourged Prussia off the face of the earth.

If, then, Jeanne Poisson had not henpecked Louis XV, Frederick would have had seven clear years of comparatively easy going in the administration of Prussia's internal affairs; and the question at once arises, what would have been the effect of those years on the future of Germany, not only as a factor in international politics, but also, and of far more consequence, as a moral and intellectual force in the world? Even under the handicap of the Seven Years' War, that force, as we all know, has been very great; and the fact of its having been so great adds interest to the conjecture at what it might have been, and might now be, but for that handicap.

The line of investigation in this instance is fairly easy to follow. For one that is less so, if the essayist cared to go back as far as the year 1535, he might look into the political consequences of the henpecking of Ercole, duke of Ferrara, by three of the most unbearable Frenchwomen who ever gained a place in recorded history. Then there was Prince Menshikov's Lithuanian servant-girl who seems to have put Peter the Great up to most of the good things he did, and also some bad ones, and who habitually burned the ground around his imperial moccasins when he did not show enough alacrity about heeding her suggestions. She became Catherine I of Russia, and if Catherine II's polyandry had not preëmpted the

interest of our prurient reading public, she would no doubt be quite a figure in our modern fictional biography. Again, there was Sophia-Dorothea, whose henpecking of her husband resulted in the death of her first-born son, which opened the way to the throne of Prussia for her second son, who is known in history as Frederick the Great. Again, there was Susanna Wesley, who, despite her absorbing labors as the mother of nineteen children, still found time to hold the bull-whip relentlessly over her husband and her son John, who became the founder of Wesleyan Methodism. So one might go on through a long and varied list, from the contemplation of which one arises with an enhanced respect, perhaps tempered by some little touch of uneasiness and apprehension, for the astounding qualities of generalship therein set forth and made manifest.

IV

'Why, of course that is true,' cried a vivacious French friend, with whom I lately broached this topic of henpecking. 'Who does the milking in Europe? The women. The American woman won't do it, so the man must, with the result that presently he is bored with it, and invents a machine to do it for him. She won't sweep; the man gets tired of living in squalor, and rather than do the sweeping himself, he invents the vacuum cleaner. She won't cook; so for a while the man risks dyspepsia and ptomaine poisoning on the utterly uninteresting food which your public eating places provide, and then invents automatic toasters, roasters, boilers, fryers and God knows what-not, on the forlorn chance that he can get something out of them that is fit for a dog to eat. She can't think, can't read anything worth reading, can't converse intelligently, can't sit still; the man puts up with her restless-

ness as long as he can, and then invents the automobile, the radio, the motion picture, in order to take her out of herself, and thereby give him a few hours of peace.

‘If you looked into it, I believe you would find that henpecking is responsible for half the so-called labor-saving gadgets in the world; and I assure you, my friend, this henpecking has made considerable history already, and is making more every day. It goes against my grain to say so, for I like your people and admire the many good things they have done, but I believe they are fast taking leave of their ancient and inbred integrities, and are setting up instead the ideal of a national life which shall yield all good things to everybody at the touch of a button. My understanding is that you call it the More Abundant Life. I call it a life without any worthy purpose to guide it, without intelligence, without principle, without conscience — in a word, without character. I don’t like many things that are going on at home in my own country, and still less do I like some things that our neighbors are doing; but neither they nor we are setting up any such ideal of a national life as that. Your Mr. Hopkins said as much last fall in an issue of that magazine which you sometimes write for, and he is right.

More of you ought to be saying the same thing, and saying it straight from the shoulder, for if you persist in following after that ideal, you may take it from me that it will sink your civilization straight down to Peg Trantum’s, as our old friend Panurge says, fifteen fathom below the corridor that leads to the black pit of Demigorgon.

My friend’s imagination may have been a little overwrought, though I do not imagine he meant to hold the influence of our women wholly responsible for this unpromising state of things; yet no doubt their influence must be reckoned with in casting up the sum of that responsibility. But we are not concerned with this at present, for I cite the conversation only as suggesting still another point of departure for a research which the essayist might find rewarding; and with that I bring my little flight of fancy to an end. I reiterate my belief that poverty and henpecking have never been appraised at anything like their actual importance in determining the course of history; and while, as I said at the outset, I would not dream of asking for a book on the subject or take the responsibility of recommending one, yet if such a book should by any chance appear, it would be just the book that I should like to read.

DOWN FROM SNOW LINE

BY GEORGE ALLEN

THIS is our Everest we have not climbed;
We went to climb with double trust of step,
And now the two of us go down again.

Now we can be together on the plain
With level thoughts and only level thoughts;
But well behind us is the unruffled snow,

Upland, too far, we will not ever know;
It lies for braver feet than ours to climb,
And all its beautiful field is virgin still.

Why did we ever see the astonishing hill,
The dark blue sky, the white snow stabbing it,
The wind upon the point of our desire?

But this was morning when we did not tire;
We knew the gradient, and we took our chance,
And went so high together, and descend.

In safe green landscape you are still my friend;
But looking round, I see without excuse
All Everest between our footsore tracks.

THIS BUSINESS OF SHIPPING

BY GARDNER HARDING

I

ON June 29 of last year Congress passed the Merchant Marine Act of 1936, the long-awaited new charter of American shipping. It was almost nine months later that President Roosevelt designated a chairman for the United States Maritime Commission, the central body of administration responsible for making the act work. The extraordinary length of that interval and the notable character of the appointee emphasized the importance and complexity of our shipping situation. For the appointee was Joseph P. Kennedy, returning to Washington after acknowledged administrative success as chairman of the Securities and Exchange Commission. He was confirmed with almost pathetic eagerness by the Senate, and embarked upon the most hazardous and perhaps the most thankless task in Washington to-day.

The shipping industry stands in as great a need of strong administrative association with Washington as any interest in the country. For four years it has awaited the development of a new policy; for when Congress gave the President, in June 1933, the right to cancel or modify the ocean mail contracts it meant that the old policy was done. But Mr. Kennedy has more to do than merely to administer a new policy. It is his job to foster a consistent shipping policy. If past errors are not to be repeated, he must guarantee at least five years' adherence to a

single programme for developing the American merchant marine, and must prepare for the orderly carrying out of that programme over twenty years of uninterrupted long-range planning. The danger is not that Mr. Kennedy will fail, but that he will leave too soon.

Ever since 1914, short-range planning has vitiated the growth of the American merchant marine into any sort of ordered maturity. When the war broke out in Europe we had a fleet which carried about 10 per cent of our commerce. When most of the ships that carried the other 90 per cent went home for war duty, depression descended upon us out of a clear sky. We suddenly found a huge unemployment problem in our cities, riots for shelter in churches, bread lines and soup kitchens, prices falling because we could not ship abroad, and factories closing because we could not get foreign supplies. It was our first lesson in the value of a modern merchant marine.

In 1916 we created the United States Shipping Board and then the Emergency Fleet Corporation. We built the *Pipestone County*, and the *Blue Hen State*; we built Hog Island and Great Lakes ships, concrete ships, an immense fleet, and we poured into it and its administration over three and a half billion dollars. As usual, when a country short of shipping needs ships, prices rose. We paid an average of \$150 a ton, and in 1920 we had 1926 vessels

acquired at that price. We then liquidated. We sold for \$33 a ton, disposing of 1450 ships which had cost the government \$2,300,000,000 for the 1921 price of about \$340,000,000. We continued to operate a hundred other vessels at an ultimate net loss to the government of about \$120,000,000.

Despite this colossal loss to the government, however, it must be remembered that we put the United States back into the shipping business. Our ships began to carry up to 40 per cent of our commerce, later dropping down to between 30 and 35 per cent and consistently staying there. Those *Pipe-stone Counties*, *Black Herons*, and the like, — 2000, 3000, and 4000-ton cargo ships, — are the backbone of our shipping to-day, the modest freighters which the public never hears about. We have built practically none since. When you read that 85 per cent of our foreign trade fleet will become obsolescent in four or five years, it is these ships that are meant. For we built a merchant fleet without any programme for replacement.

To-day one looks back with more regret at that mistake than at any other. Beside the 26-billion cost of the war the 3½-billion shipping bill seems an inevitably minor casualty of our former neglect. One quarter of that sum, spread over the previous twenty years, would have provided us with most of the ships we needed. Having been so extravagantly improvident once, we continued on the same course. The Merchant Marine Act of 1920 made only indirect and half-hearted plans for the replenishing of our merchant marine with new ships. It passed the coastwise provision forbidding direct voyages between our coasts and our insular possessions to foreign ships; it offered preferences in rail rates to goods shipped on American ships, and it began to 'take the government out of shipping.' The government loans un-

der this act produced only fifteen ships, all coastwise, and then ceased to influence shipbuilding.

That lack of foresight almost at the start of our shipping programme may be traced down to the present in one outstanding case. Shortly after the war the Munson Line put four new ships on the East Coast run to South America and cut the time from New York to Buenos Aires to twenty-one days. The *American Legion* and her three sister ships were the blue-ribbon ships of their day. But such has been engineering progress since the early twenties that now much larger ships cost less to operate per voyage, make faster time, and carry more cargo. Twenty shipping lines now call regularly at Buenos Aires, and at least nine ships superior to our once smart liners fill the eyes of our good neighbors. Against the crack 22,000-ton British Royal Mail boats, to say nothing of the 25,000 to 30,000-ton German and Italian ships, our 13,750-ton Munson liners still plough their twenty-one days to New York. Foreign lines are making money, but in 1934 the Munson Line went into bankruptcy and so remains.

It was not until 1928 that a real attempt was made to build ships for our foreign trade. Under the Merchant Marine Act of that year a system of mail contracts was developed which frankly had the purpose of assisting the operation of American ships on essential trade routes. More important than the 27 million dollars allocated for this purpose was a revolving fund of a quarter of a billion actually devoted to loans to shipping companies for the purpose of building new tonnage. To that era we owe the *Manhattan* and the *Washington*, which have proved to be splendid and economical ships in every way and have at last put our flag back in the North Atlantic at the stern halcyards of big modern ships for the first time in a generation. The

Dollar Line got the *President Coolidge* and the *President Hoover*, and provided the best argument for new ships by operating the 22,000-ton new liners at the same fuel cost per day as the old 13,800-ton *President Harding*, which the United States Lines has to run at a loss until it can build a third ship on its New York-Havre run. The Grace Lines built 52,000 tons, and their five new crack ships are preëminent to-day on the West Coast of South America. The Mediterranean route, the West Indies and Caribbean services, matched our competitors, and with our new ships to the southern Pacific we have won the preferred position in the trade with Australasia.

In all thirty-three merchant ships of 366,000 tons were constructed under the 1928 act, beside nine tankers of about 80,000 tons; and a further 270,000 tons were reconditioned. The authorized construction loans amounted to about \$116,000,000. That this method of encouraging shipbuilding has been sound is proved by the fact that of the \$145,000,000 lent for shipbuilding, under both the 1920 and the 1928 acts, only \$3,000,000 is in default. Considering the fact that the world depression has been particularly severe on shipping, and especially on American shipping, this record will bear comparison with that of any American interest to which the government has lent money.

II

This brief retrospect of the recent history of our shipping omits the political factors, under which each change of party requires that much of what has been done by the preceding Administration should at once be shown to be iniquitous and extravagant. Government loans gave us the bulk of our blue-ribbon fleet, and government construction gave us the war fleet; yet because, for a time, ships were govern-

ment-operated the Republicans capitalized for years the errors of the old Shipping Board and of the Emergency Fleet Corporation. Nevertheless, the government contribution to our mail-contract fleet exceeds by almost one third that of private American ship-owners. Even in the thirty-three new ships built after 1928, private equity amounted, when the Senate reported on it last year, to only 48 per cent, with the government still owning the remainder. Inevitably, government operation *per se* steadily decreased. To-day only five small lines remain in which the Maritime Commission shares the management with private agents. They comprise thirty-nine ships, aggregating less than 300,000 tons, about one tenth of our entire fleet in foreign service. And even these arrangements, it is promised from Washington, will soon terminate; so that nowhere on the high seas will the shadow of government-aided competition be cast on the private operation of our ships.

Yet, in spite of the restriction of actual ship operation, government responsibility for our shipping has steadily increased, and the government equity involved, as the above figures clearly indicate, has certainly not decreased. With few exceptions, ships have been built only through government aid, and shipping operations on almost all our essential lines have proved possible only through government grants. The necessity for these grants has not precluded violent disputes over their form and character. We have run ships outright, we have paid by the voyage; we have made up losses to manager-operators of our ships; and, lastly, we have resorted to the subterfuge of the mail subsidy, paying our ships roughly ten times the actual cost of carrying the mail.

In June 1933, Congress gave President Roosevelt the power to cancel or modify all mail contracts. In the long

investigation that followed, the trail of politics again entered our shipping with the change of party. The report of Senator Black revealed many evils. Complicated groups of holding companies carried on many businesses other than shipping; executives received pay out of proportion to the status of the company; there were partnerships in foreign-flag lines and unwarranted subsidies for coastwise lines. The report lost much of its potentiality for real value to the public, however, by its violently partisan character. Though a true bill on the whole, its distortions of animus and prejudice have made the task both of the President and of Mr. Kennedy far more difficult with the shipping companies. And much of this suspicion and distrust has found its way into the otherwise highly constructive Act of 1936.

As the present charter of our shipping, this act is probably the best-rounded piece of merchant-marine legislation produced in this country since the war period. Many of its shortcomings may still be corrected by intelligent and understanding administration, as Mr. Kennedy already knows. It is a great improvement over the 1928 act in one conspicuous feature. Under that act, the government lent money to shipowners to contract for ships in American yards, the shipowner paying to the shipbuilder, even though in deferred payments, the full American price. This was not putting the American shipowner on a real parity with his foreign competitor. Since the average figure now used in Washington as to the relative cost of a comparable foreign ship is 60 per cent of the cost of an American ship, the moment an American ship went to sea and competed with foreigners its actual competitive value fell from a unit of \$1,000,000 to one of \$600,000. These capital charges added materially to the cost of operating an American ship.

Under the present law the shipowner pays the comparable foreign price for his ship, and the government pays the American shipbuilder the difference. This is a wise adjustment of the government's bounty, so that it now promises to aid both parties to the transaction. Henceforth the investment of the American shipowner competing with foreign ships will not carry an extra burden that sometimes exceeded 50 per cent.

Moreover, instead of receiving a camouflaged mail subsidy, the shipowner will now receive an outright grant based on the comparative cost of operating his vessel with his principal foreign competitors on the same trade route. The gross amount of these subsidies is estimated to approximate the mail grants, at somewhat less than \$30,000,000 a year; but in particular cases considerable revision will be made, the basis for the new subsidy being the actual service to American trade performed on an essential trade route. In frankness and plain intention this reform has much to commend it, and has been generally accepted by an American public which all political observers reported as hostile to ship subsidies throughout the decade following the war.

III

Here the broad virtues of the act come to an end, and its multitude of qualifications, prohibitions, and regulations enter into the picture. One shipping executive has counted fifty-four rulings made in the act as to things shipping companies must not do. There are provisions that shipping executives must not be paid more than \$25,000 a year, that shipbuilding companies must not make more than 10 per cent profit, prohibitions against holding companies, against business connections with foreign-flag ships, against lobbying, against collusive bidding,

against every form of iniquity divulged in the hearings before the Black Committee. What the shipowners like even less than these hampering restrictions is the requirement that they must finance 25 per cent of the cost of their new ship 'to the Commission,' which they interpret as 40 per cent of the foreign cost, an apparently highly burdensome requirement on an industry which is only now beginning to recover from the depression. And what the shipowner likes least of all is the broad labor charter in Title III of the act, establishing wage and manning scales at the highest existing levels and making it the responsibility of the Maritime Commission to see that this 'social contribution' to the standard of living of the American seaman is paid out as part of the subsidy he receives from the government.

These are serious objections, but none of them are fatal ones. The serious outlook for the future lies rather in the actual complexion of the American shipping business itself, its status as a business and not as a ward of the government. It is not a large business. Its gross annual income is estimated by shipping men themselves as not greatly over \$300,000,000, or about the size of our candy and confectionery business. In the hearings on the present Shipping Act it was divulged that, with the exception of one mainly industrial line, the liquid capital of all the American shipping companies operating mail contracts is only about \$4,000,000. It is not an integral part of our great organizations of capital. Railway and banking capital is interested, for example, in relatively few lines, mainly the smaller freight companies.

In these circumstances its prospects of replenishing its ships without the aid of the government are small, as has been proved by the almost complete stoppage of building when government assistance failed. The condition of our

shipping industry at the present time reflects not only inability to build ships, but neglect on the part of the government to repair a deficiency which has placed us in a hazardous position in international trade. Since 1933 the size of our foreign-trade fleet has been forced into third place by that of Japan. We have somewhat over 2,700,000 tons (with Germany close behind), compared with Japan's approximately 3,000,000 and England's great superiority at well over 13,000,000 tons. But only half of our tonnage is capable of the modest speed of twelve knots, and we are on a level with France and Holland in striving for fourth place behind England, Japan, and Germany. In ships ten years old or less, only one sixth of our fleet can be counted and we are in eighth place, Italy and Norway also leading us. Finally, in ordinary, run-of-the-sea freight tonnage, in the little ships which carry the big freight, we are at the bottom of the list of the world's maritime nations with not a replacement since 1921.

It is reassuring that the first plank in Mr. Kennedy's programme is to embark at once upon the building of 150 of these freight ships, thus plugging up the greatest deficiency in the American fleet. The next point of replenishment will be in the group of combination freight and passenger liners. Between forty and fifty of these ships will modernize our fleet to competitive status. Tankers will also be given some aid, though on the whole the industrial fleet has shown more ability to take care of itself than any other part of the shipping community. Thirty tankers built and building over the past two years have constituted our entire shipbuilding programme since the depression. Of the six larger companies of the American fleet reputed to be in good health financially to-day, three are our industrial carriers of oil, steel, and fruit.

But behind the programme of necessary replenishment there are grave questions which our merchant marine will have to answer. In the first place, can the investment be found for new ships? Even on the limited scale asked for by the government, this is going to be difficult for many of the lines, with existing equities already possessed by the government and repayments under way. Some have gone so far as to suggest that it will be franker and more wholesome in the long run for the government to own the new ships itself, and lease them on a charter-hire basis to the companies on a twenty-year plan. This has the great advantage of easy payments at the start. Moreover, it would not, according to its proponents, cost the government so much as the twenty-year deferred-payment plan, with its substantial burden to the companies of a heavy initial down payment.

The government has so much title to our ships at present anyhow that the difference would be in principle rather than in practice. And, since a ship lasts only twenty years, what is wrong, from the shipowner's point of view, with the plan which hires to him ship service for this period, with the title at the end of it not in his hands but the government's?

IV

Another problem for the shipping industry and the government to consider is whether we need so large a fleet. We probably do not, provided that our replacements are up to the standard we showed we could build in the 1928 programme. It is not in more ships or in bigger ships that our greatest need lies. It is in well-managed ships, wedded to an established trade route where there is actual business for American ships, competitive with our rivals on a healthy give-and-take basis.

It will be unwise to look for ton-for-ton replacement, when it is also well known that a newer ship, like a modern automobile, will do twice the work of an old one, owing to greater speed, cheaper fuel consumption, and many other factors of which all shipowners are aware.

Why, again, this insistence on cost differentials as the sole determinant of the difference between American and foreign ships? If we want to establish ourselves as carriers of prime commodities upon which the life of the nation depends, — such as rubber, for instance, — we should put ships on the necessary runs whatever the disparity of operation. On the other hand, no formula should lead us too far into the crowded shipping lanes of the north Atlantic. If prestige is a greater factor than trade in the ship lanes to the River Plate, then it is a superior interest of the American people and should be paid for on that basis. In other words, the Maritime Commission will be wise if it imitates the Tariff Commission, and demands latitude in deciding what differentials to pay American shipbuilders and operators in conformity with its own practical experience, and in accord with half a score of imponderable factors, beside that of flat differences in costs, which would never show on an accountant's ledger.

What the shipping business needs most is a far better long-range accord in its necessary partnership with the government. Shipping itself, modernized in approximately its present volume, is absolutely indispensable to the American people. We cannot afford another solution to the shipping problem which will leave us in exactly the same predicament in five years' time. The present deficiencies can be made up in ships and even in solvency of shipping companies; but past refusals to plan for the future and to stay by the programme profoundly challenge the new Maritime Commission.

WHY WE STRUCK

BY RUSSELL BOOKHOUT

I

At midnight, October 29, 1936, we struck.

For ninety-nine days water-borne commerce ceased on the Pacific Coast of the United States except when English, Japanese, or Scandinavian ships paused briefly to discharge passengers and take on stores, or when oil tankers steamed into the silent harbors. The Maritime Federation of the Pacific, a superunion of all the West Coast unions whose members depend on the sea and its commerce for a living, federated on industrial lines, withdrew the entire active personnel of a major industry from that industry.

From the Canadian border to the Mexican line, and out in the Hawaiian Islands, every longshoreman, checker, and scaler walked off the docks. As soon as their ships were safely moored and all safety regulations complied with, every captain and mate left the bridges, every able-bodied seaman the decks, every cook and steward the galleys, every radio operator the wireless rooms. In a vital industry employing nearly 40,000 people, only a handful of stenographers and shipowners remained busy in offices uptown.

Ships clotted the harbors and cargo rotted in the holds while the strike dragged on into 1937. The productive wealth held stagnant amounted to hundreds of millions of dollars. Scores of steamship companies and waterfront employers were directly involved. The

fleets tied up comprised hundreds of ships, from clumsy little steam schooners with teakettle engines to magnificent transpacific passenger liners. The areas finally involved were the entire coastlines of the United States. In monetary loss, that part which can never be regained, the cost, conservatively estimated, was close to a billion dollars.

None of this need have happened. Yet it will probably happen again. That it should not happen is the desire of the maritime workers quite as much as it is that of the shipowners. We will strike again only if we believe that the benefits won are revoked, or if the union control that guarantees their continuance is attacked.

In the heat of the struggle, and to gain ends they thought justified, both shipowners and workers have feared to give an inch lest a yard be lost. That attitude is passing, I believe. On our side, now that the shipowners have accorded us a recognized position of bargaining on equal terms with them, we feel that we can negotiate knowing our demands will receive consideration instead of complete disregard.

Two cooperative moves that I witnessed the same day, shortly after the strike ended, illustrate this. Together with V. J. Malone, an official of our union, — the Pacific Coast Marine Firemen, Oilers, Watertenders and Wipers' Association, — I went aboard

an intercoastal freighter. The company had completed a rearrangement of the crew's quarters. The messroom next to the men's quarters had been torn out and rebuilt amidship near the galley. This left considerable space in the after-house, which permitted more rooms with fewer men in each. The remaining space was designed for a recreation room, where the crew, when off watch, could gather without disturbing men asleep in their rooms. The additional comfort gained can only be appreciated fully by seamen accustomed to the cramped quarters we usually have to endure.

The significance of this concession to the crew lay in a scene five years earlier when I tried to convince one of the company executives that deck hands should be put on an eight-hour day. He got very red in the face and shouted vehemently that to work deck hands less than twelve hours a day would break a government regulation.

I witnessed the second coöperative action that evening at our weekly union meeting. The port superintendent of a shipping line sent a communication about several of our members who had got drunk and delayed the sailing of the ship. One of our officials, whose record for backing up union members in disputes with shipowners is second to none, moved that the men be disciplined. With over three hundred men in the meeting, the motion carried six to one. A year earlier, feeling was so intense against shipowners that, regardless of his popularity, any man making such a motion would have been booed off the floor.

II

Not everything is peaceful on the Pacific, however. The desire to be coöperative is present, but one cannot overturn a century-old rule of the sea and replace it in three years with a perfectly working substitute. The system

is too new, and the rules not yet clarified. Also, there still remains much resentment on the part of the men because of the years that have passed, and there is much fear of the future on the part of the shipowners.

This is an exposition of the background of the seaman's life in relation to the causes of the recent strike, not only because I have been a seaman for years, beginning in 1926, but also because the 1936-1937 maritime strike was a seamen's strike. We struck because seafaring is a life as well as an occupation, and the natural evolution of the social side of that life has been artificially retarded far behind that of the people ashore. Other units of the Maritime Federation were aware of this situation, and although their own differences with employers could have been settled without a strike had they deserted the seamen, they refused to accept new agreements until the seamen had also received their just demands. This was not charity. Strictly speaking, it could not even be called sympathy. It was common-sense logic directed toward their own preservation. For, as Benjamin Franklin phrased it on a similar occasion, 'We must all hang together, or assuredly we shall all hang separately.'

American seamen man the third greatest merchant fleet in the world. It is essential to national prosperity and national defense, this fleet. But, until the last decades, it was American in name only. It was American territory inhabited by residents of other countries, almost to the exclusion of Americans, either native-born or naturalized. During the latter part of the nineteenth century and the early years of the twentieth, the fear of American 'hell ships' drove native Americans inland instead of to sea. Most American overseas commerce was then carried in foreign bottoms. The sailors from these ships were often shanghaied aboard

American ships. They knew no other craft, and when in America stayed with the occupation which was familiar to them. Even to-day the English on ships is spoken with a great variety of accents. Everything from Tagalog to Danish is heard when the seamen lapse into childhood tongues.

The European maritime nations contributed most of the seamen. Scandinavians, Finns, and English filled the deck departments. Scotch and Liverpool Irish went below to tend the machinery, as did the Latins from the Mediterranean region. Around this nucleus has grown up in the last twenty years a body of young American-born seamen. Previous to 1929, these seamen spent an average of from three to five years at sea before returning to land to marry and settle down at a shoreside occupation. During the depression, however, many who had gone to sea in former years returned when jobs ashore became scarce. Others who would have left the sea, had conditions been normal, remained on the ships. Newcomers are decidedly few. The Marine Firemen's union, to which I belong, has an active membership of over 4000 on the Pacific Coast. Yet, only slightly more than a hundred new members were taken in by the union last year.

At present America has more skilled seamen than at any other time in history. It is unusual to get on a ship and find more than a few men in any department unable to hold down every unlicensed job in that department — cooks', machinists', and electricians' jobs excepted. Union regulation of the percentage of skilled men on a ship and the jobs beginners may hold is more stringent than the government's new safety-at-sea requirements. As might be expected in a highly skilled group, the average age of the men is high, ranging between thirty-five and forty. The runaway boy of old who went to

sea would never be trusted to care for one of the great modern turbines.

On the Pacific Coast, 23,000 of these Americans live on the ships they drive across the seas. To the landsman, a voyage is a vacation, and a ship, a floating hotel. To the seaman, a voyage is a period of work, and the ship, his home and nine tenths of his world. Perhaps the percentage should be higher, for he will probably average about twelve hours a week off the ship, and on long voyages it will be less than that. He lives twenty-four hours a day in this small factory, eating, sleeping, and seeking recreation in close proximity to his work. When the ship reaches port, the passenger goes ashore to stay, but not the seaman. He sails out on the ship when it leaves, for another month, or perhaps five, at sea. Like his brothers ashore, he must work fairly consistently to eat, but, unlike the man ashore, he must live constantly with his work.

In this lies much of the cause of strife. In this life the seaman is continually under the control of his boss. His employer is also his butcher, baker, and candlestick-maker. He is hotel-keeper and cook. He polices the seaman in his home, and gives him paternal permission sometimes to leave that home. He tells him when to get back. He tells him where to sleep, when to eat, where to stand when he looks at the sea, and where and on what he may sit. Everything ashore that has to do with a man's life away from work (transportation, home life, entertainment, even associates) must be provided for the employee on the ship by his employer.

III

It can be understood, then, that additional issues were involved in this maritime strike besides those for which most men strike. A man ashore strikes for higher pay, then uses the increased

income as he wishes, and where he wishes, to buy better living conditions. We at work on the ships must bargain for these improved living conditions when we ask for better wages or working conditions, and we must bargain with the same man — our employer. Ashore the shopper has the advantage, for the merchant or innkeeper wants his trade. But on a ship the merchant or innkeeper has the advantage, for he is also the employer, and the job he offers includes in its pay the food and shelter that can be shopped for nowhere else if we take the job.

As to the life lived at sea under these conditions, it is a curious mixture of paternalism, feudalism, and garrison life projected into the ultramodern setting of a machine age. Everything is metallic, hard, utilitarian. We are walled in by riveted steel plates that line our sleeping quarters, messrooms, washrooms, and the passageways between. With us, at work or asleep or reading, is the continuous thump and whirl of turning machinery — the sense of endless motion.

At the end of the four-to-eight watch at night, I come up out of the fireroom, climbing a long, steep ladder of steel to a passageway directly above the boilers. The Black Gang's quarters are here on this deck, with a steel plate and some concrete separating us from our work. In the passageway is the machine shop, with its lathes, drill press, and grinders. Opening off the shop are three rooms, each containing four men, four beds two-high, four lockers, and a bench. The door to my room is closed, for the twelve-to-four fireman is sleeping. The storekeeper, who has a lower bunk, works daytimes, and is playing cards in the messroom. The fourth occupant of my room is the fireman who has just relieved me below. I move cautiously to avoid waking the sleeping man.

The room is seven feet wide and eleven feet long, and seven feet up to

the mass of piping squirming below the overhead. The porthole is closed because of a heavy sea outside, and we must depend on a metal conduit the size of a tomato can, which spills languid air into the forecastle, where an electric fan mixes it with the smells already there. The concrete is hot underfoot, too hot to step on with a bare foot, and the temperature is at least a hundred in the closed room. The sleeping fireman lies naked on his bed, and the sweat runs off him as fast as it gathers.

The ship has left Manila and is steaming for Singapore. The heat in the fireroom on this day was a hundred and twenty on the floor plates, and a hundred and fifty-four on the upper gratings when I changed the oil strainers. Although I did only the most necessary work, and stayed under the ventilators as long as possible, as I walk into my room the sweat squeezes through the leather of my shoes as though I had waded across the deck when it was awash. I replace the shoes with wooden sandals and, picking up my water bucket, soap, and towel, go into the washroom around the corner. The other men who came off watch with me are there. We fill our buckets from a fresh-water tap and lower a steam end into the water to heat it. With the buckets on the deck we wash ourselves thoroughly. Next we refill the buckets and wash out all the clothing we wore that watch — socks, shorts, singlet, and dungarees. Fifteen minutes after we went below to-day they were soaked with sweat. We hang them on lines above the boilers in the fiddley, gasping in the fierce heat that drives up past us, and careful not to touch any metal. Then we go to our bunks to toss in heavy, drugged sleep until called at three-thirty for the morning watch. Had the weather been calm, we might have slept on deck on the hatches.

Are all ships like this? Not all. A

few are better, and many are worse. There was one ship, an East Coast ship on which I sailed one of the times I shipped out of New York, which had fifty of us in the crew berthed up forward under the forecandlehead — the raised deck in the bow where the anchor windlass is placed. We cleaned up in a triangular room twenty feet long and twelve feet wide at the base. The washrack was a plank with four holes cut in it to hold our buckets. No steam line led forward to the washrooms, and whenever we wanted hot water we had to go amidships to the galley, carry our bucket up two flights of stairs to the passengers' promenade deck, across that and down another ladder to the forward well deck, and across that into the fo'c'sle. By that time the water would be almost cold — but then, if the weather was bad, we had already had our bath while crossing the deck.

Toilets are usually primitive cast-iron pipes, and so unsanitary they would be instantly condemned by any city board of health were they found in a slum tenement. So would nine tenths of the crew's quarters be condemned if they were in buildings ashore. On a great number of ships, the lavatories open directly off the fo'c'sle, and whenever bad weather strikes and portholes have to be covered the stench is horrible.

Overcrowding fo'c'sles is one of our worst sources of discomfort. Anyone who has had to live in a house where someone on a night shift has to sleep daytimes will realize what it is like when 70 per cent of a ship's crew works both day and night. The problem of the person awake is to do the necessary work of cleaning himself and his gear and amuse himself without disturbing the sleeper. When quarters are badly crowded, with men who work at different times of the day on different watches mixed together, it means

misery and hardship for all. On large ships, I have seen fifty men sleeping in one big room, or expected to sleep there. One of the newest 'luxury liners' has nearly thirty herded together. Six or a dozen men to a room is common practice, and ships with a maximum of four men to a room are bragged about.

IV

In 1932, I signed for the maiden voyage on a liner financed, designed, and subsidized by the government, which was to set a standard of beauty and luxury for other nations to shoot at. The admiring visitors were not taken through the crew quarters. The unlicensed personnel were berthed six men to a room that was eight feet wide and eleven feet long. This allowed each man for himself, his bed, his locker, his clothing, and his share of passageway, a space about four feet wide, four feet high, and seven and a half feet long — this without considering the usual number of pipes and conduits along the bulkheads and overheads.

Nor is this a solitary example. Multiply these dimensions by four, six, twelve, or twenty, fill the space with as many men, beds, lockers, throw in a few benches and the personal possessions of the men, run dozens of pipes big and little through the room, and that is home at sea. Have some of the men in bed, some going to bed, some getting up, and others already up and busy in the room, and that is life at sea. If, in such quarters, three men want to change their clothes at the same time, one changes his clothes and the others change their minds.

Since sleeping quarters can be used only occasionally for recreation, the men go to the messrooms to read or play cards or talk. These rooms are available usually for two hours in the morning, three in the afternoon, and from six o'clock at night on. Half a

dozen noisy groups are busy at diverse activities in each. On freighters, the crew may go anywhere on the outside decks during their spare time, but on passenger liners the crew space is very restricted. In the tropics one spends a great deal of time on deck, even sleeping there. Farther north, sunshiny days are fewer, and the crew stays below most of the time. On runs like that, cramped and poorly ventilated quarters are more than usually detrimental to a seaman's health and morale. This is especially true of the engine-room crew, which must spend the working time amid steam and fumes of hot oil.

Incidentally, while writing about these living conditions which some may think are down to Oriental levels, it might be well to mention that on certain Oriental ships, Japanese tankers, the crew is berthed *two* to a room. The new foreign ships, especially the Scandinavian, provide more commodious and better-situated quarters than do the American ships.

Of all unlicensed seamen, the members of the stewards' department have fewest accommodations. In addition to sleeping in crowded 'glory holes,' they eat standing up on all but the very newest ships. They don't have messrooms where they can put plates on a table. Instead, each one fills a plate at different steam tables in the galley, then leans back among the pots and pans, supporting a plate in one hand and using a fork with the other. Neither do they play cards, write letters, or read books at the nonexistent tables in the nonexistent messrooms. Their crowded quarters have to serve for recreation rooms. Their hours start at six in the morning and end about ten at night. In between meals they snatch brief intervals of time off. On short runs where they must assist passengers to embark and get off, they have even less time to themselves.

So much for the unlicensed personnel. The officers have been better treated in the matter of quarters and food than their men, which is just and right, as food and quarters are the major part of a seaman's pay, and the officers are the most experienced and valuable seamen on the ship. On the matter of overtime exacted by their employers, they are as bitter as their men. It is hard to come in from a long voyage with home and family waiting, and be required to spend fifteen hours a day on the ship. Those ships that have been away for months require the most attention when in home port — but so do the men. During the two years that overtime compensation has been exacted by the men, much less overtime has been required.

Next to poor food and miserable quarters, the question of overtime has tied up more ships in the guerrilla warfare since 1934 than any other trouble. Eight out of ten seamen are opposed to any overtime, because it is most often exacted in port when they wish to be ashore. The time ashore is brief these days, with ships operating on express-train schedules, and the men want all of it they can get. Up until this spring, the seaman was allowed proportional time off instead of getting cash for overtime. This time off was usually given when he did not care to go ashore. The boss was able to demand the extra work anytime and anywhere, but the seaman could not do the same with his pay in time off. He had to take it where and when it was given him.

This is a picture of the sea life that we who drive America's ships across any kind of water, from the Arctic to the Antarctic, must live. We man an industry necessary to the welfare of all Americans ashore. It is not necessary for their welfare, however, that we should live at a level far lower than they do.

MY MOTHER

BY HARRY HARRISON KROLL

I

I SEE her: a thick-bodied unbeautiful woman, going through frozen dawns to milk a cow with burrs in its pale hide; or chopping and toting firewood into the West Tennessee cabins where my childhood was mostly spent; or bogging through mud and slashing November rain to feed the pigs and mule — a shapeless person in a man's old coat, man's brogan shoes, a crocus sack over head and shoulders to turn wind and rain.

When I was a child I accepted her as a child accepts all that befalls it, of hunger, poverty, summer sunlight and warm rain, sleet and snow and nightmares of malaria. She used to do the washing out of doors at a tub stand by the spring, her strong body moving with rhythm over the washboard. Near by a pot of clothes bubbled with lye suds over a bright fire of dead sticks. Between washings the iron pot served as a chief cooking utensil in provident summers when the gardens were good. Into it my mother would put a large soup bone and meat scrap, add onions and potatoes, vegetables of all sorts, and make a large supply of thick soup, which later she put aside in crocks to be reheated and thinned for dinners and suppers through the ensuing week. She might, at hog-killing time, boil the backbones and spareribs in the same manner, and thicken the resultant broth with cornmeal. This would later be cut into strips and fried as needed.

Grub like this, she said, would stick to the ribs. Surely it was more than good enough for a share-cropper's family in the dark boxed cabins in the delta cotton lands of West Tennessee.

It was all very different in seasons of starvation — when high waters cut off the crops, or low prices of the staple took it all for the planter's share. I recall that for weeks one bitter winter we lived on dried cowpeas, frozen turnips, and corn cake made by mixing meal and water. The little meat to be had was given to my father because it was he who went to wage-work. My brother Charles had saved seeds in the summer and fall: corn ears with blue grains, cornfield beans of varied colors, crowder peas. We boiled the corn and ate it, and cracked the beans and peas into flour to thicken the johnnycake.

There was, that late winter, a great freshet in the Mississippi River, and backwater came up Forked Deer, covering all the bottom lands, and surrounding our cabin in the creek bottom. I remember the night when my mother waked me, and I looked out upon the gray-brown cold expanse of dreary water. Charles, my two sisters, and I huddled on the porch while my mother brought old sacks and wrapped us. I wept, staring across that silence of flood. I could see the trees dark against it, and heard a fish thresh at the steps. The cottonweed stood just above the water in the fields. We waded out to

our waists, going through the dim bleak rain, through the night, out of the flood. We found our way by the snags and decayed fence posts. We waded almost a mile before we were free.

To this day, at night when I am chilled, I dream of water — of flood-waters, eddying sullenly about me in the darkness, while I cling to cotton-weed, grope for a lost road, and cry out for help in the rain.

II

I suppose in the freshness of youth this huge woman who bore me was comely, but I have no memory of her in physical or mental beauty. I recollect a woman of broad hips and deep breast, standing at the paling gate and laughing loudly at a ribald jest exchanged with old Jeff Goff, a neighbor share-cropper. The year we lived on Mud Creek we cleared a tract of bottom land, a labor in which all the family engaged. While my father, Charles, and I rolled logs and made them into heaps, my mother and oldest sister Murdy toted trash and chunks to the burning piles on a pole litter. Murdy was a deep-breasted, red-cheeked, powerful but clumsy girl. Walking at one end of the litter with a heavy load, she would often stumble and fall. My mother would curse her angrily.

'Are you going to fall over all the rotten logs in the woods?'

The year that I was twelve we moved to Dyersburg, living for a time at the Fair Grounds. This was a locality of Negro dwellings and bawdy-houses. I went to work for a butcher named Griggs, delivering meat. I would get out of my pallet at five-thirty, eat a cold breakfast, and walk uptown to the meat shop to start deliveries of steak and ham and sausage about six. Each Saturday night my mother would appear at Griggs's shop

and say to the butcher: 'I'll take Harry's pay now.'

Griggs would pay her a dollar and a half, my weekly wage. She would go away with the money.

I remember that my pants became so ragged and worn at the seat that I was ashamed to go into the back doors and kitchens. One of the pretty young town girls — her name was Cora — said to my mother: —

'If you don't patch that child's pants, I will put him to bed and put on the patch myself.'

My mother washed my pants and patched them.

III

Another year we were living in a log house at the back of the Wash Pearce plantation. We had a two-acre patch of pea hay, which had been cut on Friday, but by Sunday it was not yet fully cured. In the summer afternoon a thunderstorm quickly gathered. The rain, my father thought, would ruin pea hay. The whole family began frantically toting the hay and putting it in the log barn, and we succeeded in saving it just as the downpour came. It was perhaps a week later, at supper, that my mother said in a hushed voice: —

'A man come to the back door to-day and warned me that the grand jury was going to set and pass on us taking up the hay last Sunday. He warned that it would be best for you to go away, Pap.'

She described the man vaguely, then with some minuteness of detail. My father was frightened. I recall that that night he slipped away, armed with an ironwood walking stick, while my mother stood in the yard, in the dim moonlight, watching after him, her square face strangely set with a square expression of fear. My father was gone for two or three weeks, while night after night my mother would put us

children to bed at dark, not allow the lamp to be lighted, and sit brooding in the darkness. Perhaps through the day she would run the cards, sitting at the table and smiling faintly at times. The man who had warned her — or she had said such a man had warned her — was the jack of diamonds. Sometimes she would turn the coffee cup and study the ground patterns a long while. I would look on, sometimes asking why she smiled.

‘Was I smiling, Harry?’ she would ask.

It was a bright moonlit night when my father came back home. I saw him at the gate, through the door as I lay on my shakedown. He came in, asking, ‘Maw, is it all right? Reckon it would be all right now, Maw?’

‘The man come this evening and it’s all right now,’ she said.

It was a prowler now that worried her. He would go around the house, she said; she’d wake deep in the night and hear him knocking about. So my mother and father contrived a device for making sure about this prowler. Between log smokehouse and corner of plank lean-to there was a narrow passage across which my parents stretched a strand of haywire about breast-high to a man, and ran the wire through a crack into the shed room, attaching it to the heavy headboard of a bed, so balanced that anyone’s running into the wire would throw the board against the floor with a crack like a gun.

They sat up for many nights, but the board did not fall.

Now it was autumn, and Charles, a boy of fifteen, had that afternoon walked to Dyersburg. Murdy and I were playing at the chip pile when my mother came frantically running, snatched us up, and crushed us to her bosom, weeping and screaming.

‘Soddy is dead! He has been killed. I saw it as plain as life!’

She stood there with dilated eyes, beating herself in grief. She caught my sister and me to her again and smothered us with caresses. Great tears washed down her terror-gray face. It was a face that terror sat upon with a curious hospitality. Murdy and I began to weep as crazily as she.

‘Soddy’s dead . . . Soddy’s dead!’

‘We got to go find him.’

We started away, the three of us, along the small road that went by the field’s edge toward the big house. When we had gone perhaps a quarter of a mile my mother bent suddenly and picked up a fragment of Charles’s old straw hat which he had torn off and thrown away. She sobbed, clasping it in her hand and kissing the fragment. We kept on, and had come near to the Wash Pearce big house when my mother had a change of expression. She watched furtively, and saw Mrs. Pearce in the yard. My mother stopped. She stood hesitant, then turned away into a path that went past the big barn, as if her errand took her that way. We crossed the orchard, got into the beech woods, and thus roundaboutly returned to the tenant cabin.

At sunset Charles walked into the yard.

IV

I worked, through these years, off and on for Griggs, or at this or that job, for, with other boys in school, I was always at work. My folks had moved out to the Roellen cotton lands, and I lived now with Griggs and his lank wife in the two small rooms in the rear of the meat shop. He paid me a dollar and a quarter a week now. Unvaryingly my mother appeared Saturday nights and said, ‘Mr. Griggs, I will take Harry’s pay, now.’

Perhaps she had risen that morning before day, and worked through the intervening hours until she walked the

four miles into town. She would take the money, buy food, and walk back that night. She was a woman of almost superhuman physical endurance. She had a spiritual indolence that was, at last, beginning to fill me with a boy's sense of shame. She would not patch my clothes until Nell Griggs sent word they'd have to dismiss me unless my pants were patched. I can't recall that she grieved when we had those seasonal periods of starvation. She may have worried and I was too young to realize it. I think of her as a coarse, illiterate person, jesting loudly with uncouth men, but clinging to a curious virtue of sex. I don't believe that she ever thought about me except as a child who, in becoming a dependable source of limited income, was only paying the debt it owed her for giving it life.

I would sit wistfully at Griggs's shop window in my idle hours when school children trooped wildly down to town from the schools on the high hill known as College Heights, and watch the clean, bright girls and the loud, bullying boys. I wondered how it would be to go to school. Horror that I would forget my lessons when time came to recite to the teacher would make me start up with a shudder. I had learned to read a little — Cora, at the big 'sporting house' down at the Fair Grounds, had taught me out of a primer on quiet Sundays; I began to read some now. Griggs picked a book up out of the road down at the slaughterhouse and sold it to me, deducting a dime from my week's pay. My mother was angry.

I recall vividly one night how this ability to read did a curious thing to me. Someone — a kinsman, maybe — telephoned to Griggs from Roellen, ten miles away, that he wanted a message delivered to a place two miles north of Dyersburg. The night was freezing cold, and the rain turned to ice as it fell. Griggs turned to me: —

'Want to carry that message out and make a quarter?'

'Yes, sir!' I said eagerly.

Griggs wrote it down on a piece of paper, and I put it into my pocket. I went out into the night, bending into the bitter north wind. At the last street light out of town I read the paper. It said: —

'Little Jenny is dying, and we want you to pray for her immortal soul.'

I struggled on and delivered that message, returning through the bleak icy night, so numb that I could hardly stagger along. Two days afterward a letter with a quarter arrived for me. It was Saturday, I recall; and that night when my mother came I remember how proudly I gave her the extra coin.

I do not remember that she thanked me.

It was some while after this that I went to work at the local telephone office as messenger and office boy. My folks had moved close in, just without the limits of town, west. It was a small unpainted four-room house, set in oak trees. Since I must go on duty at six o'clock in the morning, it was necessary for me to get up and eat breakfast and walk a mile and a quarter to be on time. I went off duty at nine o'clock at night. I had every other Sunday off. For this work I was paid fifteen dollars a month. I was, at this time, fifteen years old — a tall, blue-eyed boy, quick-muscled, willing, and affable. Every first of the month my mother would appear at the manager's desk.

'I will take Harry's pay now, please, Mr. Lyles.'

Afterward she would go away with the three five-dollar bills.

I carried my dinner in a tin pail. Once I remember how ashamed and choked I became when one of the pretty central girls discovered me behind the switchboard eating the contents of the pail — lye hominy, cold, which my

mother had hastily prepared for lunch, with nothing else.

Looking back, I can see that, for all the long hours, these were good years. I had leisure, and access to the library of a gentleman who roomed next to the central office. I read much, and learned to write.

One day — I was eighteen — my mother and I had a bitter quarrel because I wished to spend ten dollars of my wages for a suit of clothes.

'You owe a debt you can never pay for me bringing you into life!' she said, and took the money and went away.

Soon afterward I left home and did not again return to live with my folks.

V

Twenty years passed. I had educated myself, married, taught in country schools in the Deep South, and worked my way through college, taking the B. S. and M. A. degrees. I became a college professor and wrote a book — a novel, of the lives of share-croppers in the delta cotton lands. The book made some stir, sold well, was issued in England and sold to the movies. It was a strange dream to be realized by myself, this boy who used to tote meat into back doors and drag cotton sacks across the delta rows. I might be forgiven a bitterness for my childhood of labor, poverty, a species of nakedness — but I was n't bitter.

I am not sentimental when I say I am somewhat grateful. For I learned to *work*. I've heard men say they owed what they were to their mothers. I, too, may say this, but not in the sense

I suppose these men mean. From my mother I have an inheritance of almost superhuman energy. Those boyhood years, with long hours and the necessity of keeping on the job, disciplined that energy. When I left home I worked with the fury of ambition. I never knew much about spending money, so I saved most of what I earned. I had concluded that only men who can do the mental and physical work of *two* men really ever succeed in a real way, for the work of one man is required for a living, and that of the other to achieve success. So I lived frugally, worked hard, and with wife and children paid my way through college, took my degrees, and wrote my book. I had known hunger, nakedness, cold, and shame and fear. I had wanted so much and had so little.

So it was to occur to me after a while that my mother's contribution, if negative, was of profound value in a life of achievement. Even her phantasies became, in me, a source of creative power. Those harsh years made me a realist. Her dramatizing herself in strange rôles was my birthright of creative ability.

I see her now, my mother: an untender, shapeless woman, going through cold and rain; clearing in the muddy bottomlands; working in the plantations; cursing, laughing at her ribald jokes; wading the floods with her babies out of the dark cabins by night in the Tennessee cotton lands — a hard, queer, futile old woman; and it seems to matter so little that she took my last quarter, and would n't patch my pants, or let me buy a new suit of clothes now that I was grown up.

THE CONTRIBUTORS' CLUB

A LOVER TO HIS LASS

I HAVE a liking, I confess,
For sturdy, clear, emphatic 'Yes';
It says what it means and it means what it
says,
It takes its place with the Yeas and Nays;
But 'Yup' and 'Yep' and 'Yop' and
'Yeah,'
Oh, those I do not like, my deah!
They're slovenly, and ugly too,
And quite unworthy, Sweet, of you.

A question here I fain would ask.
To answer it's an easy task:
Look in my eyes and tell me true,
Do you love me as I love you?
Ah! don't say 'Yep' or 'Yop' or 'Yup,'
But fill my cup of comfort up,
And all my life with rapture bless,
By simply, sweetly, saying 'Yes!'

A SPECIAL PLEA

MUST you 'reside'?
Can you not live?
Must you 'donate'?
Can you not give?
Must you 'retire'?
Some go to bed,
Old-fashioned pillow
'Neath old-fashioned head;
Draw up the blanket
(*Not* slumber-robe) round,
And so go to sleep;
May their slumbers be sound!

'PRONE' AND 'SUPINE'

WHEN Jack and Jill came down the hill,
And fell with fearful whack,
Poor Jill lay *prone* upon her face,
Jack *supine*, on his back.

Some writers mix the two words up,
But oh, they *might* divine
The difference there is between
One's tummy and one's spine!

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GLAMOROUS

DEAR SIR,

I'm waxing clamorous
About the use of 'glamorous';
With an insistence *hammerous*
The word assaults my eye.
My wrath I scarce can mollify
When it is used to qualify
A fountain or a furbelow,
A picture or a pie.

From 'glamour' doth the word derive —
'Magic, enchantment' — why deprive
The word of meaning real and live
To make it fit the need
Of tailor or confectioner,
Of good-for-the-complexioner,
Of lingo or of lollipop,
Of wassail or of weed?

LAURA E. RICHARDS

THE OLD KNOX

ALMOST the first automobile in the New Hampshire town where I was born belonged to my family. I can barely remember standing with my chin just above the nursery window sill and watching it being pushed into the driveway beside the house on the day my brothers 'had the accident.'

Family tradition says that it was in fact the second car which the town could boast. The first, according to the same authority, belonged to Mary Baker Eddy, and was only used to accustom her horses to the sight of it and its like on the road. My knowledge of 'the old Knox,' as the family has called it for a generation now, is derived mostly from my elders, whose recollections, I am sure, have lost nothing with the passage of years. But anyone who possessed such memories as these of the first family automobile, the second to be familiarly seen in the state capital, would be a fool if he did not make the most of them. And if I am ever tempted to think that the

saga of our first car is only a myth, a work of imagination, I have my own dim but actual memories to remind me of its core of truth, and also the evidence of the family picture albums. In these old volumes, full of unreal photographs that look as though the washwoman had laundered them with too much bluing in the water, we still see ourselves go bowling along, sitting oddly upright in the old car. One parent, in an enormous wide hat with a heavy veil tapering to the chin, looks rather like the funnel of an early steam locomotive; the other wears a becoming version of the moustaches of the period, and a derby with a very round crown. Boys of assorted ages appear in blouses with sailor collars and straw hats with stiff flat brims. And there we are, ensconced in that vehicle which we might otherwise be tempted to think we had imagined. We see ourselves as a part of the historical record.

As my brother eloquently said, there were people who got their first automobile ride in that car. 'Stop it!' they screamed, and asked to be let out at once. The fright of some of them was not as unreasonable as it now seems, for the car had a curious feature, fit to terrify anyone exposed to it. This was a seat, a sort of advance rumble seat, opening out in front of the steering lever, in front of the engine, so that the occupant felt himself projected along directly over the road. When the latter began to fly underneath him at the prodigious rate of twenty miles an hour, when he saw the highway vanishing under his feet without any intervening barrier except a fragile dashboard, he could be forgiven if he felt that he was going to be pitched forward and his brains dashed out against the New Hampshire stones.

When the automobile was ready for delivery, my father took the train to Boston with a friend and drove it back. They were all day at the job, and did not get home until well into the evening. The same drive takes about two hours now; but the old Knox had to be stopped and filled with water every fifteen miles, and roads, tires, and velocities were not what they have since become. Tires were always popping, especially on hot summer days, when the dirt roads, presenting one long series of 'thank-you-marms,' were baked dry and

brown, and brought one blowout after another. My elders would come home three, four, and five hours late from a holiday fishing trip, dirty and covered with sweat, after patching punctured or exploded tires half a dozen times in fifty miles.

And the hills! The hills of that primitive time were august, towering, perpendicular. Steep as the side of a barn, we called them; and they looked it. They beetled over the audacious contraption that tried to chug up them, they menaced and laughed at it. The car strained and jerked, halted altogether, stalled and beaten. But there was a system for getting the better of the hills. The driver, when he felt the feeble power beginning to expire, — and he felt it by the jerking of his head back and forth like a lily on the end of a stem no less than by the complaints of the motor, — would do his best to manœuvre the car over the next thank-you-marm. With that behind the rear wheels as both a brace against sliding downhill and a footing for the next effort, he would give in to the inevitable and let the car stop. Everyone, except the driver, would climb out and mass behind the paralyzed machine. The driver would race the engine, give a warning shout, and throw in the clutch. The car would lunge forward, the massed human power would heave from behind, and with two or three frog-leaps, bouncing on the hard road as if it would pound itself to pieces, it might make the next thank-you-marm. By a series of such joint convulsive efforts, man and machine together might make the top of the hill.

Where are now the topless crags that the old Knox used to climb so proudly? When we bowl up through New Hampshire to-day, we look with anxious interest for the big hill outside Bristol, scene of so many comic struggles and epic achievements. We can't find it any more. It has ceased to exist. The new car goes over all deviations of altitude in the road at forty-five or fifty miles an hour, and never makes a squeak of protest.

Another peril to automobiles in those days was fire. Gasoline was highly inflammable; cooling systems were primitive; pipe lines broke and spilled hot oil on hot metal. My father (as I have heard) noticed that dirt collected profusely about the engine of the old Knox. He devised a sort of crankcase to keep it out, got a local black-

smith to execute his design, and had it fitted to the car. Unfortunately it not only kept out dirt but air too, interfering seriously with the free circulation of the latter which was supposed to help keep the engine cool. All innocently my brothers, with some chosen friends, took the car one morning to drive out to one of their favorite fishing streams. No shadow of trouble fell across the day until, bowling prosperously over a little rise and beginning to descend the other side, they saw in front of them a man on a bicycle. They honked him, probably not without some thought of giving him a start. But the results were out of proportion to anything they could have expected. The man gave one look over his shoulder, fell off his bicycle, picked himself up, scrambled over a stone wall, and ran off through an adjacent graveyard.

It was still easily possible to meet on the roads people who had never seen a horseless carriage, and who were startled and alarmed if one crept up on them from behind a little hill, especially if it said 'Honk' without warning. My brothers decided that here was just such a specimen, some unworldly farmer or country storekeeper quite unprepared for a sudden visitation by the latest and most revolutionary of man's inventive marvels. They laughed, and chugged ahead. But when a man's behavior has startled another person beyond all accounting for, and he cannot find any cause in his own consciousness for the freakish effect he sees, he usually looks around to find out whether any other cause can be operating in the neighborhood, a cause which may perhaps concern him too. This is just what the fishing party did, and one glance behind them was enough to explain everything and more. Streaming out in the rear of the car, like the tail of a comet, was a long column of flames, blown backward by the wind of their speed. They were riding in a devil-wagon for fair, and likely to be burned up in it. The driver put on the brakes, but already the heat had destroyed the brake bands. The car did not stop. He shut off the engine, and it gradually slowed. But as it lost speed the flames rose toward the perpendicular. The fishing party decided that it was high time to jump. They hit the road, picked themselves up, and ran after the still-rolling car until it came to rest just

outside a farmhouse, from which a small boy, hysterical with excitement, came running out with a glass of water.

But nothing could save the old Knox from burning down to the wheels. That is how, standing with my chin on the sill of the nursery window, I watched with awe the unhappy, charred wreck pushed into the side yard, past the elm tree, to wait there until my father came home from the office to take stock of the disaster with his own eyes. My brothers sat down disconsolately on the front steps to wait for him.

The Knox was rebuilt, and actually had a later career. But for me, in retrospect, in the dim justice which memory insists on rendering to this faithful servant, its record ends in that fiery consumption which left it a mere awkward spread of wheels, with the steering post rising from it like the broken mast of a sunken vessel, showing where it went down.

Waiting there on the front steps, with the burned frame standing appallingly evident in the driveway, my brothers grew more and more apprehensive. The more they looked at it, the more plainly unbecoming and out of place that black wreckage appeared, exposed to full view in the yard, presenting the full scope of the catastrophe at first glance, with no time for gradual approaches and softening explanations. They could not stand it. They decided that the place for the hulk was down in the back yard, by the garage. The yard sloped downward; it would be easy to coast to a better position.

So one of them got aboard to steer, and the other gave a push. But unfortunately they had forgotten the burned-out brake bands. There was no stopping, once the car got well started. It rolled down the little slope of lawn, accelerating as it went; rolled hideously toward Father's garden, toward the sweet peas trained on birch brush and flowering beautifully, toward the rows of tomatoes and beans and radishes. It burst through the sweet peas, it mowed down the corn and potatoes, it came finally to rest in the soft soil where the ground leveled out, and stood surrounded by its havoc and its devastation, like Lee at Chancellorsville. There is a sort of military grandeur and terror about the spectacle — a good place to take leave of the old Knox.

The CONTRIBUTORS' COLUMN

THOSE of us who have to take our animals as we find them in pantries, barnyards, zoos, and museums, can have little concept of what wild life really means in those remote spots where man alone is tame. Educated at Eton and Cambridge, **Ivan Sanderson** (p. 129) early in life (he is in his late twenties) applied for a passport to the Animal Kingdom. In search of specimens for the British Museum, he visited Egypt, India, Ceylon, Malaya, Sumatra, Java, Celebes, Cochin China, Japan, the Pacific Islands, America, Mexico, and Canada. In 1932-1933, he was appointed leader of the Percy Sladen Expedition to British Cameroons, West Africa, this time collecting data as well as specimens, with the first laboratory set up on a mobile expedition. In the English manner, Mr. Sanderson can sign himself F. L. S., F. Z. S., F. R. G. S. Two more installments of his delightful chronicle will appear in subsequent issues.

John R. Tunis's (p. 141) love of sport is undimmed by the fact that he is twenty-six years out of college. For close to two decades he has witnessed and written about Wimbledon, the Davis Cup Matches, the principal sport events here and in Europe. He hates sham, he calls professionalism a spade, and it irks him to find that the United States is not the greatest sporting nation on earth.

Born in Salem on May 4, 1822, **Caroline Howard King** (p. 151) by the process of recollection spanned the years between the Revolution and the Spanish War. She knew heroes of the Revolution, she saw Salem in the heyday of its seafaring, and when in the autumn of her life she wrote down her memoirs, it was with the insistence that her pages should be held under lock and key until every contemporary she had mentioned had passed beyond reach of the public's curiosity. Although she made no pretense to literary ability, Miss King wrote with a clarity and style well befitting the New England of her time.

Neither a post-bellum world nor a post-depression world could deflect the natural inclination of **Robert Nathan** (p. 162). 'He continues,' says a friendly critic, 'to confront sordidness and corruption with gentle irony instead of loud raillery, and to express himself in a lucid, poetic prose in place of the harsh, gravelly prose . . . commonly

known as naturalism in literature.' Poet, novelist, and musician, his books have a place apart on the twentieth-century shelf.

The mystery of what goes on within the Kremlin to-day is such that few can venture an explanation. **Henry Wickham Steed** (p. 163) served the London *Times* as correspondent at Berlin, Rome, and Vienna, as foreign editor from 1914 to 1919, and as editor in chief from 1919 to 1922. He is now lecturing on Central European History at King's College, London.

Russian-born, **William Reswick** (p. 173) was for a decade one of the American correspondents in Russia, serving for most of that time the Associated Press.

Christopher Morley (p. 182) does all that is expected of a man of letters: he is columnist, novelist, critic, a lecturer to the young and the beautiful, champion of new talent, and one who upholds the long tradition of table talk. All of these occupations, however, have had recently to give precedence to his editorship of the Eleventh Edition of Bartlett's *Familiar Quotations*.

A graduate of Sandhurst, **A. W. Smith** (p. 189) served on the Somme, in Russia, and in India. He now lives contentedly in Ipswich, Massachusetts.

Seven colleges and universities in turn have conferred honorary degrees upon **William Allen White** (p. 196) by way of saying that he is one of the most widely respected and best beloved newspaper men in the United States. He has been proprietor and editor of the *Emporia Daily and Weekly Gazette* since 1895, and during that long service he has come to know a good deal about Uncle Sam.

Once an editor, now an author, **Walter Brooks** (p. 202) most enjoys telling stories to children. Here is his *modus operandi*: 'I've spent the last three summers in Higganum, Connecticut, writing and, for recreation, hunting in any attic I can get into for rare books. Have done this for years but never found anything very choice. Have another children's book, *The Clockwork Twin*, coming out in August. I can't seem to think of anything else, except perhaps to defend the lack of punctuation in my stories, which bothers some

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people. It seems to me to give the effect of a story told as if to children and made up as you go along — as it is — and to gain speed and interest and occasional *non sequiturs* not otherwise obtainable. I think people will read them through without stopping, partly from the feeling that it would be impolite to interrupt the speaker.'

The son of Henry Seidel Canby, **Courtlandt Canby** (p. 206) has been on an architectural survey with Arthur Upham Pope, journeying into the forbidden shrines of Meshed, along Afghanistan, and back across the desert. His journey to Persepolis he made on his own, arriving at midnight after a wild ride through the mountains. When last heard from he was in upper Iraq with Dr. Speiser's Pennsylvania-Bagdad expedition working upon the great mound Tepe Gawra.

A lawyer, a Democrat, and an Episcopalian, **Wendell L. Willkie** (p. 210) has been president of the Commonwealth and Southern Corporation since January 1933. In this issue he presents the much disputed case for private ownership.

One of our most valued contributors in the South, **Winifred Kirkland** (p. 219) literally rose from her sickbed to send us her present manuscript. In response to the editor's acceptance, this is what she said: 'I can't tell you what it means to me, for in a way it's a lot more than an *Atlantic* acceptance, big and precious as that is to me. Then you are glad I am a "brisk and active contributor once more" — I'm not that physically, of course. Last April I had a queer attack — only a moment — but after it the doctor gave me up — said it would be only days or weeks or just possibly months before I'd go out in a similar fall. For six months I could n't use my head, except that with terrific effort I tried for the *Atlantic* Million Dollar Contest. In August I had another fall and broke my right shoulder. That did seem, even to me, rather an extra. Suddenly it came to me in October that perhaps after all I could write again, if I could get off all by myself and try. So I went off to a nice homey hotel in Nashville — from roof to basement everybody there takes care of me. Under those circumstances I wrote "Writing — A Retrospect," overwhelmed that suddenly a pen was once again a pleasure, and started to find myself actually amused at a career that I feared might be lugubrious to describe. You can see that it required an acceptance to prove to me that I am really not going to die just yet awhile, and actually able to do the job I most desire.'

Suppose James Wolfe had not been killed on the Plains of Abraham, suppose Napoleon had

not been sick with a head cold at Borodino, suppose a few famous wives had been less domineering — it amuses **Albert Jay Nock** (p. 228) to reread history in the light of what might have been. Those who enjoy the flavor of Mr. Nock's essays will be pleased to hear that a volume of his collected papers is scheduled for publication in the early autumn.

George Allen (p. 236) is a poet who follows the lamp of knowledge wherever it leads. Educated at Rugby and Oxford, he spent a year lecturing at Hamburg University. A Commonwealth Fellowship in Literature brought him to this country, where he studied first at Western Reserve, later at Harvard. He is now back in Surrey, where he has been studying the local State Schools.

The health of our Merchant Marine means much to **Gardner Harding** (p. 237), who has lived and worked in the Far East and who subsequently served as Secretary of the National Foreign Trade Council.

An *Atlantic* contributor in his early thirties, **Russell Bookhout** (p. 243) has worked his way around most of the accessible portions of our globe. Space does not permit us to list the complete variety of his occupations. It is sufficient to say that he has been a strikebreaker in the Pullman shops, a fire fighter in the Oregon forests, one of the dynamite workers in the Du Pont plant, and seaman for much of the past ten years. He is a member of the Marine Firemen's Union, and knows from long experience what the Black Gang have to contend with.

Few men have worked harder for their education than **Harry Harrison Kroll** (p. 249), who is now teaching at the University of Tennessee Junior College. His father came to western Tennessee in a covered wagon and there settled down to be a share-cropper. Young Kroll was farmed out by his mother, and picked up whatever education he could in the fields and woods. Not till he was over twenty-one did he cross the threshold of a country school; he entered with the sixth-grade children, managed to get a teacher's license in half a year of intensive study, and so began his career as an 'educated' man.

* * *

The correspondence in connection with **Albert Jay Nock's** discussion of life in Haiti has been so varied and interesting as to justify at least a brief representation of divergent points of view. In fairness we ought perhaps to add that to our way of thinking the value of Mr. Nock's paper lay more in his philosophy than in his statistics.

Dear *Atlantic*, —

In your May issue appears an article entitled 'The Bright Isle: Gulliver in Haiti,' by Mr. Albert

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Jay Nock. As I was formerly one of the wicked 'American invaders of Haiti,' I began to read the article with some interest and continued with increasing surprise, since several important premises for Mr. Nock's arguments were based on statements which I felt certain did not correspond with facts. These statements principally concern the ratio of literacy in Haiti and the question of ownership of land in that country by foreigners. Accordingly, I have taken some pains to ascertain the facts by making inquiry of the Director of Rural Schools as to the matter of literacy in Haiti, and of an attorney of the Haitian government as to the question of ownership of land by foreigners. Both of the informants are Haitians.

The Director of Rural Schools states that 5 per cent of the Haitian population can read a newspaper and understand it. He also states that 20 per cent of the children of school age, but less than fifteen years old, are literate. Thus Mr. Nock's margin of error is merely of the nature of 400 per cent or more.

If Mr. Nock had taken the trouble to look at the Constitution, instead of merely discoursing learnedly about it, he would have discovered that ownership of land by foreigners was prohibited by the Constitution of 1889; that it was authorized, under certain limitations, by the Constitution of 1918; that the authorization of ownership of land by foreigners was continued under the revision of the Constitution in 1932, after the 'hated marines' had departed; and that the authorization of ownership of land by foreigners is continued in the revision of the Constitution in 1935. The only change of significance has been that the period has been shortened during which ownership of land by foreigners is permitted after foreign individuals have ceased to reside or foreign corporations have ceased to operate in Haiti.

Although Mr. Nock states that 'whole generations of scoundrelly American enterprisers have licked their lips at the thought of making it [Haiti] another Porto Rico by expropriating the natives and thus enabling themselves to exploit them,' he fails to indicate those American individuals or American corporations that have amassed great wealth at the expense of exploiting Haitians. Of the American companies which have attempted to operate in Haiti on a considerable scale, I am convinced that only one could be found which does not show a loss on capital account. If all foreign industrial companies should be included, the list would probably be extended by only one additional company. It is true that some foreigners, mostly Germans, have conducted profitable trading enterprises in Haiti. But these have been on a comparatively small scale. If there were the opportunity for exploitation, which Mr. Nock so fears, and if such exploitation is not prevented by a provision in the Constitution which prohibits foreigners from owning land, as he erroneously asserts, why is Haiti still 'The Bright Isle'?

W. W. CUMBERLAND
New York City

In his article in the May number Albert Jay Nock makes the following statement: 'The Africans [in Haiti] were slaves imported by the Spanish and

French, and many French also had a slave-status, having been brought over under indenture, like our own original settlers at Jamestown and Plymouth.'

All aside from the fact that the assertion that indentured servants had a slave-status is, to say the least, debatable, the statistics of Jamestown and Plymouth do not bear Mr. Nock's contention out.

In his *Cradle of the Republic* Lyon Gardiner Tyler listed the names of 82 of the 105 colonists who came to Jamestown in 1607. Only 28 of these were indentured servants. And volume three of Justin Winsor's *Narrative and Critical History of America* shows that out of the 102 original settlers of Plymouth in 1620 only 21 were either indentured servants or sailors hired to stay with the colony or hired craftsmen. In fact, Charles M. Andrews's *The Colonial Period of American History* shows that only 12 of this group of 21 were indentured servants.

HAROLD R. SHURTLEFF
Cambridge, Massachusetts

I don't think it would be fair to let another mail day go by without recording my deep indebtedness to you, to Mr. Albert Jay Nock, and others who have made the May number one to cling to.

Mr. Nock tells us, 'The Haitian looks happy, acts happy, and there is unanimous testimony that he is happy. How many people do you know in your town who fill that bill?' I am searching among the ranchers and in the logging camps in vain. You might think the well-to-do ones would be happy, but no. All this cutting and burning has not made man happier, but the hills far more dreary. Happiness does not live along the road of exploitation.

Am glad that 'Share-Cropping in the Delta,' by David Cohn, appears in the same number as 'The Bright Isle' for easy comparison. I want to carry Mr. Nock's knapsack and shine his boots.

With appreciation,
W. L. WELLS
Ovando, Montana

'Anonymous,' who discussed her servant problem in the June *Atlantic*, aroused 'yeas' and 'nays' on all sides. From another 'Anonymous' comes this response.

Dear *Atlantic*,—

As one who is neither an employer nor a member of 'The American Aristocracy,' I find it difficult to understand the experiences of the anonymous discoverer of this class.

She does not mention the part of the country in which she lives, but in the large Midwest city in which I live the salaries she offers would seem princely to the average maid. In that connection, a newspaper item I noticed last month stated that there was actually a shortage of domestic labor at the commonly offered wages of three to five dollars a week, but at higher wages competent help is still obtainable. This was from the head of an employment bureau.

My own experience will serve as a case in point. A year ago I secured my first job — and 'job' was the word for it. You could n't dignify cooking, cleaning, and laundering for a family of seven by any such genteel appellation as 'position.'

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of three dollars a week, and I was not permitted to forget how magnificent it was. 'Marjorie,' my employer would say, 'do you know what the Howes give their hired girl? Well, Mrs. Howe gives her hired girl a dollar and a half a week, and Dora does every lick of work around that place! Mrs. Howe is an invalid, you know, and there are nine children.'

That was in a small town. Now, in a large city, I am caring for children in a house of the 'two-car, two-maid' class. My salary is nine dollars a week, and I am still considered well-paid by the other maids I know.

I think the author of 'The American Aristocracy' is a bit piqued by the changed status of domestic service. Although she says she respects her cook's profession, she seems to be annoyed by having to speak of salaries and positions rather than wages and jobs.

The fact is that the three- and five-dollar-a-week class (and the fourteen-a-week class, evidently, in some parts of the country) is no longer composed mainly of country girls acquiring experience and dull girls unable to do anything else. Many girls work for people less well-informed and intelligent than they. The reason for this is that, Great White Father notwithstanding, in recent years many girls fitted for other things have not been able to find anything but housework. These girls do not respect their profession; they resent their lot and think of it merely as a way of marking time until they get into something which uses more of their capabilities.

This is the real American Aristocracy, and where I come from it is a larger class than those who scorn domestic work without being fitted for anything else.

I also must remain anonymous, if you should print this, because of the necessity of finding somebody to work for.

ANONYMOUS
St. Paul, Minnesota

And from 'a mere man.'

Dear Atlantic,—

You will doubtless receive scores of 'Amens' to Anonymous, and a few replies from servants and ex-servants, giving the other side of the question, and perhaps from other employers who have had better success. I should like to survey the problem from the point of view of a mere man. I have a business which takes me into several hundred homes in various towns and cities in northern New Jersey. Sometimes I see the housewife and sometimes the maid, and—such is human nature—I spend considerable time listening to the woes of the one or the other. I have concluded that most households fall into one of two distinct groups, with a few, of course, in intermediate positions. In the first group are the ones who have been able to handle their domestic affairs with reasonable satisfaction. In the second are the ones who are always in trouble. They are always changing from one unsatisfactory and dissatisfied servant to another.

I wish that I could tell a palpitating public the secret of the successful employers. But, alas, they defy classification. Some are old, and some are young; some are from old American stock, and some are from more recent immigration; some are Jews, and some are Gentiles; some are well-to-do, and some

are struggling along; some have only one servant, and some have two or three; some are easy, and some are very exacting; some expect the maids to do all the work, some work along with them, and some make a definite division of the work. In fact, the only trait which they have in common is that they are able to find fairly satisfactory servants and to keep them for a reasonable period. Sometimes, of course, they are obliged to change, and then they may have an interval of trial and error, but eventually they regain a comfortable routine.

And the satisfactory servants likewise refuse to be regimented. Some are colored, but more are white; some are old, some middle-aged, some young; some look and act like servant types, and others could not be distinguished from shop or office girls; some come in from the country, and some are from the towns; some 'sleep in' and some 'sleep out'; some have families, and some do not. Their only common denominator is that they are able to find a tolerable job and to keep it for months or years.

So when a housewife, anonymous or otherwise, whines that she cannot solve her servant problem the answer is obvious:—

'Why not? Thousands of others can and do.'

R. C. WILSON
Somerville, New Jersey

From an editorial 'Easy Chair.'

Dear Atlantic, —

I was thrilled last night to read Henry Wales's story about the landing of Lindbergh. Grand story!

But I believe it was Josh Billings who said it was better to know less than 'to no so mutch that ain't so.' Zilboorg attributes this remark to Artemus Ward.

Walter Eaton should not speak of cutting the leaves of a book *with a knife*. That is a shocking practice. I have carried a paper cutter in my pocket for the last sixty years to cut leaves in books with. Charles A. Dana, of the *Sun*, always used one and I got my first one from his daughter, Mrs. Draper, mother of Ruth.

However, I have been rereading Kipling, stirred thereto, as Eaton was, by the *Autobiography*. It is funny, if true, that the younger generation does not read him. My grandchildren do, and anyhow he will come back, for his books are library books.

EDWARD S. MARTIN
New York City

Peace-loving Germany.

Dear Atlantic, —

Mr. Otto Jellinek closes his article in the June *Atlantic*, 'on the German Four-Year Plan,' with the sentence that the German people are 'finding opportunity to demonstrate their love of peace by acting in the spirit of Frederick the Great, who once said that he who wrests increased fruits from the earth does more for his native land than he who conquers a new province.'

Unfortunately, Frederick the Great is better known for conquering provinces than for wresting fruits. What a happy thought to select him as an example to peace-loving Germany!

M. BECKHARD
New York City



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RESTORING THE TRUSTEE STANDARD

BY H. B. ELLISTON

How many persons in the 'twenties bought real estate bonds (under many glittering appellations) and industrial debentures because they saw a reputable financial institution named as trustee? A good many, I dare say. A reputable trustee was deemed essential to the successful selling of securities. The following colloquy, at a hearing of the SEC on January 28 on investment trusts, yields the evidence: —

'What is to prevent salesmen from carrying around a copy of the Chase National Bank's latest statement and saying to prospective customers, "This is the institution that's back of us"?''

Hayward A. Hibberd (Vice President, Chase National Bank of New York): 'I am rather inclined to think our name as trustee does contribute to the selling value of a trust share in the mind and in the eyes of the small investor, leading him to believe he has something a little better perhaps than if the name were a small town bank.'

But, as investors have found to their cost, the word 'trustee' as applied to a mortgage, or bond, or debenture, or trust share, is a misnomer. The corporate trustee has very little in common with the ordinary or active trustee. The ordinary trustee is supposed to represent the interests of the beneficiary, and to represent those interests alone. According to law, his loyalty to the beneficiary must be undivided. So strict is the rule of undivided loyalty that a trustee who has any interest inconsistent with his trusteeship may find himself called upon to explain and justify it. The trustee under a corporate indenture, on the contrary, has his rights and duties defined, not by any fiduciary relationship with the beneficiary, or bondholder, but exclusively by the terms of his indenture with the obligor, or the seller of the securities. This relation allows of great play in loyalty.

Far from having an undivided allegiance to the beneficiary, corporate trustees may at the same time be acting as promoters, underwriters, bankers, financial advisers, bondholders, and creditors of corporations whose debenture holders they have ostensibly been selected to protect!

The trouble is not the deviousness of corporate trustees; it is in calling them trustees. This ancient and honorable word has what Cromwell would have called 'a worm in it' as applied to corporate trustees. A high-court judge once described them more aptly as *stakeholders*. They are bursars as well; but certainly not trustees.

When a corporation seeks to borrow money from the general investor public, it makes many promises, including the major promise to repay the loan, which are incorporated in a document called the trust indenture. Somebody has to keep this indenture and the security behind it. And the logical depository or stakeholder is a bank. Usually the underwriters parcel out trusteeships among friendly banks. The fee is not to be spurned, running up to \$5000 a year; and, as only a few banks do a large business in corporate trusteeships, the number per bank runs high. For this fee the bank's corporate trust department receives the bond coupons from the public as they fall due, and mails out in small lots the interest payments received from the corporate debtor.

Doubtless other mechanical duties are performed. If the corporation is unable to meet payments, for instance, the corporate trustee may issue certificates against bonds sent in to protective committees of the unfortunate creditors. But any helpfulness to the bondholder is rigidly ruled out. During the early 'thirties, correspondents used to write me and ask how X corporation could default

*New York's First Bank
Founded in
1784*



*New York Clearing House
Membership
No. 1*

4 Out of 10 Showed Losses

Contrary to popular opinion, a very large percentage of corporations lose money even in periods of great business activity.

In 1929, for instance, losses were suffered by four out of every 10 active corporations that filed income tax returns. While in that year 269,430 corporations showed a profit, 186,591 others suffered an aggregate loss of nearly 3 billion dollars.

This is not an unusual case. In each of the 10 years from 1925 through 1934, at least 39% of all active corporations failed to show a profit. In 5 of those 10 years more than half reported losses. In 1934, the last year for which figures

are available, 69% suffered deficits.

This situation clearly illustrates the need for discrimination in the choice of investments even during periods of general prosperity. Prosperity is never uniform, nor all-inclusive.

Realizing that the administration of investments for trust funds and estates requires organized research, this Bank maintains an extensive Department for that purpose. This investment research organization is by no means infallible, but we believe that its continuous studies produce far better results in the long run than can be achieved by the average individual working single-handed.

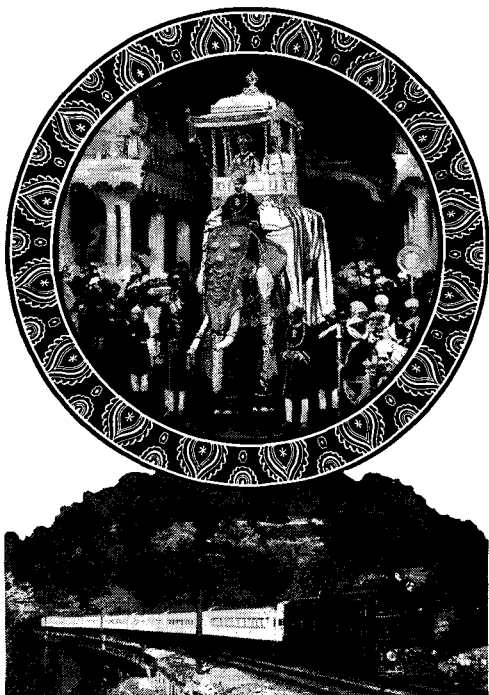
*This bank is now administering trust accounts whose makers
or beneficiaries are located in 39 States
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SEE INDIA and KASHMIR

This Autumn

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INDIA

when Z bank was 'back of it.' Back of it — but only as a dummy! I was once told of a rebuke administered to a clerk in the investment department of a bank for not keeping up this dummy appearance in responding to information sought about an issue for which the bank was corporate trustee. The correspondent merely wanted to know when a forthcoming interest payment would be made. The clerk gave all the aid he could, and for his pains was reprimanded by his superiors, the order then being issued to the office staff that in future any such queries should be referred to the corporate trust department, which made the noncommittal answer its stock-in-trade, except when news was public.

One could go so far as to say with Bernard J. Reis, in his book, *False Security*, that the signature of a corporate trustee is the most insignificant part of the indenture. A trust officer brought this out under questioning at the SEC. He was asked these questions: —

You would say that the trustee has no duty to make any independent investigation of the company which is contemplating the issuance of new securities?

Or to see that the provisions of the indenture are carried out?

Or to supervise the management?

Or to check the issuing bankers?

The answer in every case was no.

This testimony merely underlined the revelations which had already been made in the courts. The leading case had to do with one of Mr. Insull's companies, the National Electric Power Company. This company issued \$10,000,000 of debentures, and the Chase National Bank of New York was appointed trustee. As security for the debentures, the company deposited with the trustee the stock of certain operating companies. So far, so good. But in the indenture of trust executed by the company and the trustee it was provided that at any time the National Electric Power Company could withdraw the collateral and substitute something else. This, in due course, was done. And it was the substitution that caused the trouble. In place of the operating company's stock, which included that of the New England Public Service Company, the obligor of the debentures handed the trustee the bonds of a certain holding company. In time the National Electric Power Company went bankrupt. So, unfortunately for the

debenture holders, did the holding company, the worthless bonds of which went to the debenture holders in satisfaction of their claims, though the stock which was originally deposited with the trustee remained of substantial value. The debenture holders sued the trustee for recovery on the grounds that the substitution was evidence of bad faith and gross negligence.

However, the case, which came before the New York Supreme Court last year, was decided in the trustee's favor. It was held that the bank had acted strictly in accordance with the trust indenture, wherein a substitution of the collateral was provided for. Not only so; the prospectus under which the debentures were sold stated that the debentures were secured by the deposit of the enumerated stocks 'under and subject to the provisions of the indenture.'

Yet nobody seemed to regret the decision in favor of the trustee defendant more than the judge himself, Justice Samuel I. Rosenman! He simply had to obey the letter of the law. After giving judgment, however, he allowed himself the indulgence of some caustic references to such 'particularly vicious' trusteeships. To quote the judge: —

The clauses permitting substitution are so astutely tucked away that the average layman would have the greatest difficulty in discovering them. Not only the average layman, but seasoned financial experts like those who publish Moody's *Manual*, apparently overlooked the power of substitution, for until after the collapse of the system Moody's *Manual*, in describing these bonds and the security behind them, never mentioned the power or possibility of substitution of collateral.

Bondholders may not have got much profit from this and similar revelations of a system which, in Justice Rosenman's words, 'had all the potentialities of fraud upon innocent investors.' They may, however, feel some satisfaction that an effort is now being made to protect a new generation of investors. At long last the SEC has prepared the way for legislation putting corporate trustees back on the trustee standard. A bill has been submitted by Senator Alben W. Barkley of Kentucky. It would prevent trustees under indentures from having interests in conflict with their fiduciary obligations, and in general would transform corporate trustees into active trustees. I am glad to see that the bankers are not opposed to it.

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Nanking
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Hongkong

MANILA
CAMBODIA
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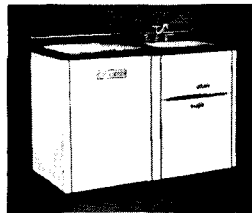
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The CONTRIBUTORS' COLUMN

ALTHOUGH appearances may be against him, every editor is an optimist at heart. He has to be, for his life is one long, persistent quest rewarded by momentary flashes of talent. Whatever ability an editor may possess is always incidental to the talent — or, at rare intervals, the genius — displayed by those who write for him. It is his quest to find the perfect manuscript and to publish it at precisely the right moment. Thus he lives perpetually in hope, and not only does he compete with all the other editors in the field, but, like a lone golfer, he continually tries to surpass himself. Every American loves to beat his own record.

The *Atlantic* editors have been true to type, then, when individually over a period of eighty years they have done their utmost to produce a better magazine with each succeeding issue — better even than they knew how! Collectively it has been their ambition to keep the *Atlantic* essentially unchanged, and yet always to modify it with their own individual touches. And this is important, for obviously if the *Atlantic* is to mean to the new generation what it meant to their fathers it must hold to the constant elements in our national life and always be able to accommodate the modern temper.

From the first the *Atlantic* was intended for those who like to read. It puts no stock in pictures, either artistic or suggestive. It offers no short cut to culture. It believes in good reading, unexpected reading, undiluted reading. For some time past the present editors have been experimenting with plans which would make the *Atlantic* more readable. The plans culminated in the enlarged format introduced by this issue, and, with your permission, we should like to point out the improvements.

To the customary text of one hundred and twenty-eight pages we have added a new form of approximately thirty pages an issue. In this new room — call it a sun porch — we intend to serialize three full-length books a year, twenty thousand words each month. Not just 'three books,' but three books of *Atlantic* quality, books so irresistibly entertaining that they well deserve their première in the magazine. Then we have moved forward and enlarged the Contributors' Column, so that it now becomes the front porch and entrance to the magazine. We want regular readers to congregate here, read the mail, and then take

their pick of the new writers. Next we have reserved space in each issue for a series of *Atlantic* Portraits, vital and authentic. As a comfort to the eye, we have enlarged the page by a quarter of an inch in width, thus affording a more generous margin and a more open type; we have selected a larger type for our book reviews, and we have made the cover (which is also our table of contents) more legible for those who run while they read. Personally we are rather pleased with this architecture, but if there are any readers with other suggestions we will listen attentively.

✓ ✓ ✓

'My concern with political parties to-day is that they perform their prime responsibility. That is, they should align themselves with intellectual honesty and present to the people the opportunity to express their will as to the real issue of our times — possibly the greatest issue of one hundred and sixty years. . . .

'America needs a new and flaming declaration of the rights and responsibilities of free men. All discussions of new parties, changes of name, or coalition are at best merely political strategies. The real question is, what do the parties represent? The special weakness in the Republican Party is its failure to crystallize an affirmative and consistent body of principle in the face of a new situation. The nation needs a party which will clearly and courageously and constructively set out the affirmative alternative to the coercive direction of the New Deal.'

It is Herbert Hoover (p. 257) speaking, and his words issue a ringing challenge to every literate voter in the country. As a Republican, he realizes that his party, now in minority, must measure up to an increasing responsibility; as a politician, he identifies the confusion and dissent which grow up within every party at a time of crisis; as an American, he is determined that we shall not depart from our tried and true form of government without a full realization of the steps we are taking.

The president of Middlebury College, Paul D. Moody (p. 269) was the youngest son of a magnetic American. His father, Dwight L. Moody, was one of the most influential men of the nineteenth century, who by the spiritual fervor of

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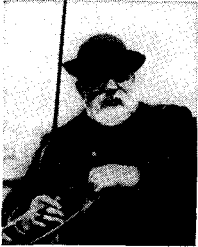
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The COLUMN

his words helped millions to a better understanding of life. It is a delight to see the great evangelist as his family saw him — exuberant, great-hearted, full of humor, direct and devoted in his faith. This is the first of the new series of Atlantic Portraits.

To read Thoreau or W. H. Hudson or Donald Culross Peattie is to appreciate how callous we most of us become to the joy of seeing. Not many months ago **Ethel Wallace Hawkins** (p. 279) was threatened with the almost certain loss of her eyesight. She prepared herself for the fateful operation, and both then and afterwards she treasured as few of us ever do the miracle of seeing.

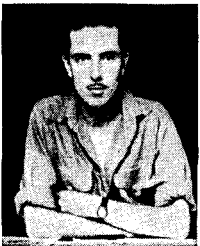


DWIGHT L. MOODY

‘I believe it is possible for the city people of the United States, during the next twenty-five years, to have the maximum of prosperity by planning with farmers to bring about an economy of gradually increasing balanced abundance. To bring this to pass may require somewhat higher Federal expenditures than before 1930, but I believe that if we do have such expenditures, supported by adequate taxes, the net income in the hands of the average business man after he has paid his income tax will be greater over a period of years than over a period without such expenditures.’

So argues **Henry A. Wallace** (p. 283), who as Secretary of Agriculture has been one of the shining lights of the present Administration. If our farmers can profit by a more careful planning of their future, here is their prophet.

Ever since his graduation from Eton, **Ivan Sanderson** (p. 290) has wanted to see how the other half lived. One of the most fearless of mammals, he has explored jungle, plain, and primeval forest in search of rare birds and animals, who are to him not game but fellow beings. His first expedition took him to the Dutch East Indies. Then, in 1932-1933, while still in his early twenties, he led the Percy Sladen Expedition to British Cameroons, West Africa, where he traveled with a mobile laboratory, recording observations and collecting specimens for the British Museum, Cambridge University, J. P. Hill, and University College, London. At present he is familiarizing himself with the zoölogy of Haiti and the West Indies. His book, *Animal Treasure*, has this



IVAN SANDERSON

month been adopted by the Book-of-the-Month Club.

In 1935 **Mari Sandoz** (p. 300) won the Atlantic Non-Fiction Prize with the biography of her father, Old Jules. She takes fierce pride in Nebraska, her native state and the scene of much of her writing.

Have you a clear, coördinated picture of what the CIO has accomplished? It is asking too much of any man that he speak of this feud without prejudice. But you know where to find **George E. Sokolsky** (p. 309) and he knows where to find the facts, the motives, and the emotions involved.

Friend and protégé of Stephen Vincent Benét, **George Abbe** (p. 318) is a young poet (with a novel on the fire) who enjoys teaching at the University of Iowa.

Although he has witnessed and reported most of the major sporting events of the past quarter century, **John R. Tunis** (p. 319) never tires of his annual pilgrimage to Wimbledon.

Ever since Jules Verne's imagination went twenty thousand leagues deep, people have wondered what it would be like to walk on the ocean's floor. **Rachel L. Carson** (p. 322), who took her M. A. in Zoölogy at Johns Hopkins University, has a clear and accurate idea. The sea is her chosen medium, and she is now employed as a biologist in the United States Bureau of Fisheries.

How old must one be to enjoy poetry? The question is not academic, but practical. **Kathryn Worth** (p. 326), a poet in her own right, has a daughter of eight who is by this time a fairly reliable critic. The account of how she graduated to her understanding may stimulate those parents who have lost the habit of reading verse. Mrs. Worth's collected poems will be published this fall under the title of *Sign of Capricornus*.



KATHRYN WORTH

Caroline Howard King (p. 329) was born in Salem, Massachusetts, May 4, 1822. As a child she knew the veterans of the Revolution, her personal friends fought through the Civil War, and as one of the oldest citizens on the North Shore she herself lived to see the reign of Edward VII. At the insistence of her young relatives, she set down her reminiscences, so that they might be read aloud at family anniversaries. And read aloud they should be, for the benefit of those who never saw Salem in its Golden Age.

In the August issue the *Atlantic* began a debate upon the private or public ownership of utilities. We called first upon Wendell L. Willkie, presi-

LIFE

As LIFE nears the end of its first year, its primary aim has become clearly articulated: through pictures, to inform.

LIFE has collateral aims — LIFE entertains, it amuses, it pleases by sheer photographic appeal. In its first year LIFE has learned much about how to be a Good Show.

But the show's not the thing. For LIFE, to be a Good Show is not enough.

Through pictures, LIFE carries out its basic journalistic job of informing. Of War and Gardening, of Art and Dictatorship, of Strikes and Fun, of Politics and Campus Doings, of Science and People — of nearly a year's living on this globe, LIFE's readers have been informed through the nine thousand pictures and nine thousand captions they have already seen in LIFE.

As LIFE goes on — there will be new pictures, new captions. Some will be solemn, some light-hearted, some spectacular, others calm.

They will be in LIFE because they are life.



The COLUMN

dent of the Commonwealth and Southern Corporation, who made a candid and energetic plea for private ownership. In this issue **Dr. Arthur E. Morgan** (p. 339), Chairman of the Tennessee Valley Authority, presents the philosophy of those who would prefer to see our utilities more precisely under government control. Trained as a civil engineer, Dr. Morgan has devoted much of his career to flood control and reclamation projects. From 1920 to 1936 he presided over the destinies of that most enterprising institution, Antioch College. In accordance with parliamentary usage, Mr. Willkie will have an opportunity for rebuttal later in this column.

Still on the sunny side of thirty, **Glanville Smith** (p. 347) has made himself expert in three lines. When he is at home in Cold Spring, Minnesota, he earns his bread as a cutter of tombstones; when he is at liberty he travels in pursuit of the furthestmost islands, and in between times he polishes and perfects those essays which have made his name familiar in the *Atlantic*. At present he is the recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship, enabling him to travel beyond the horizon's rim.

Albert Jay Nock (p. 351), of the Players Club and the South County, Rhode Island, has a friend who has an invention which ought certainly to be installed in every editorial office. What an oxometer would do to manuscript and proof reading is nobody's business. At this point we ought to include a postscript to his article which has just been received from Mr. Nock. Gardeners will like it.



ALBERT JAY NOCK

In describing the oxometer I forgot to mention that in spite of Bill's indifference to profit, the machine seems bound to be a money-maker, on account of a remarkable by-product. When in operation it throws down a small quantity of a darkish substance which has most extraordinary fertilizing properties. The stuff is so highly concentrated and so powerful that a very little of it, only an ounce or so, made up in solution with a couple of gallons of water and applied to the soil with a sprinkler, will go a long way. Bill told me he got enough out of three issues of the *Congressional Record* this spring to fertilize his garden.

Bill discovered this curious property by accident. When he was cleaning up the machine after one of his earliest tests, he tossed the precipitate — about half a teacupful of it — out of the window, where apparently the wind must have carried some of it over on his wife's tulip-bed, and a light misty rain set in shortly after. When those tulips came up, some of them grew five feet high, with stalks three

quarters of an inch thick, and the buds a good bit bigger than lemons. Bill and his wife were half out of their minds trying to account for this, but presently they noticed the same thing happening again with some grass and weeds, and then he guessed what had done it. People came from all over the North Atlantic States to look at that tulip-bed, until Bill got bored and dug the bed up to get rid of them. I asked Bill if he could remember what it was that he had been testing the machine on, and he said yes, he could; it was a volume of reports of the Carnegie Peace Foundation.

I don't know how this slipped my mind when I was writing about the oxometer, but I dare say I was too much overcome by the wonders of my own experience to remember half the things Bill told me.

Charles Martin (p. 355) was born in Lake Charles, Louisiana, and educated in Jesuit schools. He knows the Cajun country in and out, and writes about it with delightful zest.

Business men will do well to follow the discussion of silver by **H. B. Elliston** (p. 363), the financial editor of the *Christian Science Monitor*, who is now visiting London for his and our edification.

Josephine Bates (p. 366), a poet at the outset of her career, lives in Fredonia, New York, in the midst of hills 'whose gentle and quiet beauty' she finds conducive to her versification.

James Terry Duce (p. 367) is conceded to be an authority on South America. He has hiked, muled, and flown over every inch of it for twenty years, and knows the laws, the personnel, and the peculiarities of each block on the map.

An English spokesman, **Sir Arthur Willert** (p. 374) makes it his business each summer to occupy a ringside seat in the cockpit of Europe, where he may observe the motives and strategy of those statesmen who contend for the balance of power.

Many candidates were called for the first of the new Atlantic Serials, but only one was chosen — *Enchanter's Nightshade*, by **Ann Bridge** (p. 385). No novel that we have read in years has delighted us so much. The style is moving and graceful, the characterization irresistible, and the background charming as it is authentic. Here is the situation: —

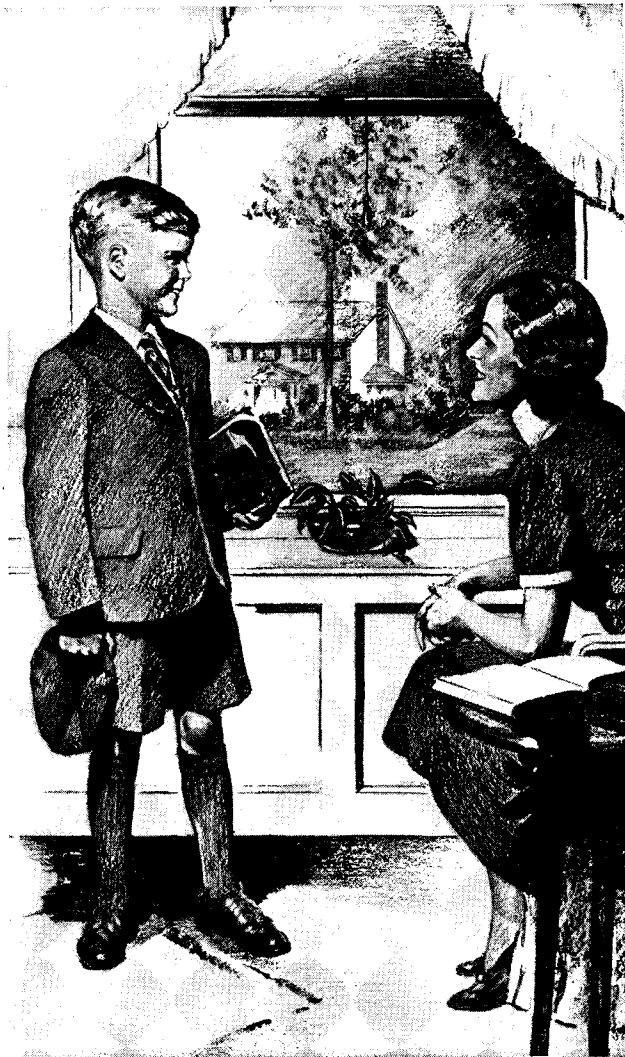
Time: the years of serenity, 1907–1908.

Place: the province of Gardone, in the north of Italy.

And the Girl: Almina Prestwich, small, very English, very innocent, for all her Oxford learning, and unconsciously very attractive with her fine pale hair and her dark brows.

Miss Prestwich is engaged as governess to the daughter of the Marchesa di Vill' Alta — a high salary, Rome in winter, the country in summer, delightful people, and a household where there is always something going on.

She finds herself in the midst of an Old World aristocracy. The shock is mutual. The urbane, intricate family are surprised by her naïveté, whereas



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The COLUMN

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✓ ✓ ✓

Mr. Wendell Willkie, who advocated private ownership of power in the August *Atlantic*, presents his rebuttal of Dr. Morgan's thesis (see page 339 of this issue).

New York City

Dear Atlantic, —

In his article for the September number, Dr. Morgan refers to two abuses in the utility industry which would be impossible of repetition under present laws. One of them is the type of extravagant financial promotion represented by the Insull affair, which is an almost inevitable accusation in any article directed against utilities. The other has to do with the excessive charges which Dr. Morgan states are frequently rendered by service companies.

The relationship between the service company and the operating company is now thoroughly regulated under the Public Utility Act of 1935. In The Tennessee Electric Power Company, the charges of the mutually owned, non-profit service company represent five sixths of one per cent of the company's gross income — an amount so small that its total elimination would not affect in the slightest the cost figures of labor, taxes, interest, or materials and supplies which I set out in my original article and upon which Dr. Morgan comments. Likewise, the elimination of every officer's salary in the entire system would amount to only a fraction of one per cent of the company's gross and could not affect the conclusions to be drawn from the figures cited. Neither the Federal Trade Commission nor any other commission or investigating body has ever claimed that there was a dollar of overcapitalization in The Tennessee Electric Power Company. The Tennessee Electric Power Company keeps its books in strict compliance with the rules of the Federal Power Commission, and the Commonwealth and Southern Corporation keeps its books in accordance with the regulation of the Securities and Exchange Commission. Therefore Dr. Morgan's questioning of the figures cited must have been made without examination of the facts. There are no intermediate holding companies in the Commonwealth and Southern Electric System.

Dr. Morgan, a public official, questions the honesty of other public officials. If he is correct that state regulation has failed through corrupt public officials, then he doubly warns us against the adoption of public ownership, where the opportunities for corruption by public officials would be greatly multiplied.

Dr. Morgan makes one charge which I must acknowledge. He charges the Alabama Power Company with 'propaganda' against the public ownership of power. To state that thus the Alabama Power Company is 'taking away from the American people the long-established right directly to administer essential public services' is as logical as to say that

Dr. Morgan's article or 'propaganda' in favor of public ownership is taking away the people's right to private operation of industry.

I am, of course, in entire agreement with Dr. Morgan when he states that 'it is coming to be the recognized duty of management to provide the widest and best possible service at the lowest possible cost consistent with a fair return.' I think the industry has well deserved his praise for 'its excellent technical work,' and for the fact that the larger part of its investment is 'prudent, necessary, honestly made.'

Dr. Morgan is the only government official of standing who has had the courage to state that 'in the operation of public "yardstick" systems there should be no hidden subsidies.' He of course would not say this if he were not conscious that such exist. Unfortunately, he has not carried the decision in the councils of those who control government power policy or the TVA.

Dr. Morgan stated that one of my proposals — i.e., that of the Power Pool, suggested by President Roosevelt — was 'too vague to be conclusive.' I think that that is probably a just criticism. It was my hope that the President's proposal would become much more specific as a result of the power conference called by the President last autumn. Unfortunately, however, that conference was terminated by the President a short time after engineers on both sides had started their research into the details of a pooling agreement. It was reported at the time that a majority of those active in the government power programme wanted, not coöperation with the utilities, but their elimination. If we can get back to the coöperative attitude, it should not be difficult for reasonable men to settle the problem in a reasonable way.

Faithfully yours,
WENDELL L. WILLKIE

The trouble with housework — a letter from a maid who speaks straight from the shoulder.

Hartford, Connecticut

Dear Atlantic, —

Reading 'The American Aristocracy,' in the June *Atlantic*, both amused and infuriated me. Such aristocrats as those exist, of course, and are only what could be expected when 'Anonymous' tried to pick a servant from among her neighbors. Neighbors never do make good servants. There's something about living on the same street with an employer that makes us wonder discontentedly why we should wait on that woman for a living, just because her father had money and her husband had a pull, whereas ours were n't so lucky. There are thousands of hard-working, capable girls, most of them receiving far less than they earn. It's very curious that none of them ever gets a chance to work for the women who eternally complain about the servant problem.

For my own part, I was thankful to take a job at three dollars a week, and to cook, wash, iron, scrub paint, and look out for two children to earn it. Sunday afternoon when the dishes were done was my only time off. Even after my day's work was over I had to keep an ear open lest the baby cry on the frequent nights that the boss went out.

Another interesting job was offered to me at eight dollars a week (ten if I had agreed to do the laundry)



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The COLUMN

and I snapped it up, thinking myself lucky. The people were college graduates, the man a geologist. 'Here,' I thought, 'are intelligent people who'll be pleasant to work for, and who'll have lots of books that I can read in my spare time.' For their cottage was in the country.

When I arrived I found the cottage was a rough cabin, with a meagre supply of oil lamps, supplemented by candles, for light. Mosquitoes and mice were plentiful. Water for washing and dishes had to be pumped by hand, and was red with rust. All the water for drinking and cooking had to be brought — that is, I had to bring it — from the spring, in a pitcher. The path was always muddy in the morning, and the tall grass and weeds that leaned over it soaked my skirt and shoes. If it rained the water had to be brought just the same.

But the inefficiency of my employer was my worst trouble. I had to be up at six to get breakfast for the husband and child. Then I had no instructions, and was never able to get any, as to what work to do for the next three hours. The boss got up at nine, after I'd waked her to ask for the grocery order. The boy came for it every morning at the same time, but she never wrote out the order the night before, though she was always a little annoyed at being waked.

I worked at odd jobs till she got up — seven o'clock being a decidedly unnatural time for loafing — and then after breakfast the Mrs. would tell me one thing she wanted done. She never gave me a schedule for the day, so I could arrange the work to do it most efficiently. Each time I finished a job I had to spend fifteen minutes being instructed about the next one.

In spite of six-o'clock rising, I was n't entitled to a rest in the afternoon, she thought, and she would set me to mopping the rough, splintery floors, which filled the mop with slivers — and I had no patent wringer. In spite of the fact that I had n't agreed to do the laundry, and was n't being paid for it, I was asked first to do the light things and, before I left, all the washing but the bed linen.

The books never did materialize. There was no library within walking distance; there were no other maids for miles around; poison ivy made walking in the fields or woods impossible. I was never offered a chance to go into town, though the car went several times a week and I should have enjoyed the slight diversion.

The climax came when my room was invaded by lice from a birds' nest just outside my window. Of course when I gave notice I said I was leaving because the country was too lonely; I did n't say that my employers were stupid, that they imposed on me, that I needed mental nourishment, and that I could n't put up with the menagerie.

After a week spent with the unemployed — I had earned just enough to keep me until I got another job — I went to work at the shore. Here I worked ten hours, seven days a week, for the magnificent sum of five dollars. There were two moods in that household — sullen and furious. It was particularly nerve-racking when other members of the family

came down for vacations or week-ends. However, the house was run on a definite schedule, and being near the shore compensated for a lot of things. When the millennium comes, perhaps maids will be permitted an afternoon shower, but until then a chance for a swim when the lunch dishes are done will continue to be a major blessing.

From my own experience I conclude that the more energetic, ambitious girls get out of housework as soon as possible because the hours are longer than in industry, the constant contact with the employer is often irritating, and because there is little chance to meet others in the same social class. The great English houses, where the servants remained generation after generation, employed footmen, butlers, grooms, stable boys, and so on. An American family, if it can afford two servants, hires a cook and a maid and drives its own car. With so few men in domestic service, girls think it preferable to work in a store, or even a lunchroom, where their chances for marriage will be better; the chances for advancement are so few and slight, and the pay so small, that few maids are likely to dream of becoming rich — or even comfortably fixed for their old age. A girl in service, like any other girl, longs for a home of her own where she can entertain friends, as she cannot do in her employer's house. The cook used to entertain the iceman in the kitchen, but nowadays the kitchens are too small for a really good-sized iceman, and besides, the family uses the kitchen all evening for mixing cocktails. A maid has to meet her friends on the street. Again, girls prefer industry because once their day is over they can leave work behind; there are no fussy children to tend in the evenings. Employers have caused — or was it the industrial revolution? — the conditions which have made good servants scarcer.

But why worry about the servant problem? It would be a fine thing for many women to do their own housework. They'd have less time for 'nerves,' complexes, and pursuing other women's husbands.

Very truly yours,

LAURA WILLIAMS

No fear of 'parochialism'?

Waterford, New York

Dear Atlantic, —

I read with a start your line suggesting the possibility that Robert Hillier's 'Letter' in the July *Atlantic* might be too parochial for your far-flung readers.

What if it is about Harvard?

And what do I know of Harvard? Very little. It is an honored name, — and, for the rest, I remember seeing handsome, lanky youths in plug hats driving about Cambridge in model-T Fords when I happened to be there one Commencement time.

But knowledge of Harvard is, I suspect, as little necessary to our appreciation of Mr. Hillier's poem as our knowing just where Xanadu and Alf, the sacred river, are to our appreciation of that one.

No, Mr. Editor, poetry will out whether its locale is known or unknown, real or imaginary.

And, may I add, don't worry about being parochial. Other things being equal, 't is no vice at all.'

H. V. BUTON

When and How did such words and terms as these originate?

O. K.	booze	palooka	chicken (girl)	plastered	to frisk (search)
hoosegow	bones (dice)	high-hat	cock-eyed	flat-foot	apple-sauce
calaboose	lousy	scram	you're telling me	yes-man	and how
bunk	grub	whoopee	fried	doughboy	kibitzer

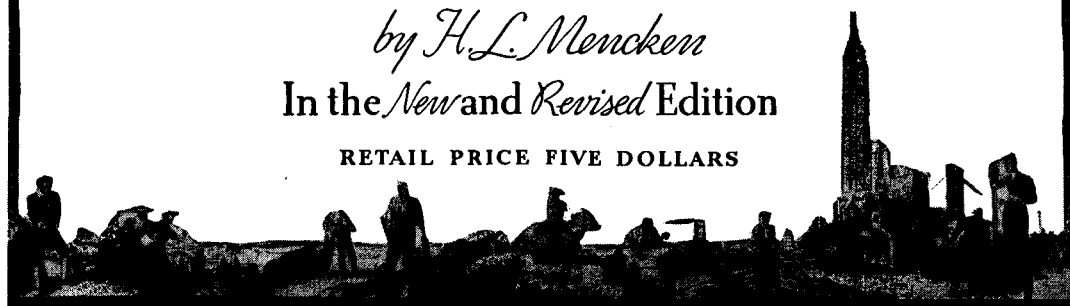
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The Atlantic BOOKSHELF



A Guide to Good Books

FOR ten college generations Vida Scudder has been a source of light and leading at Wellesley. As is true of all great teachers, her influence extended far beyond her personal dominion. A critic with a profound knowledge of poetry, an explorer of Arthurian romance, a crusader in behalf of the underprivileged, a Christian in the best sense of the word, she inspires many with the causes she has at heart.

ON JOURNEY

by **Vida D. Scudder**

[Dutton, \$4.00]

AFTER completing forty years of teaching English literature at Wellesley College, and having passed her seventieth birthday, Miss Scudder looks back in this volume over the way she has come. It is an inward way, a way of the mind and the spirit. Events are of significance not alone for their outward aspect but as markers on a journey. It has been a journey in search of reality, she says. And she has found reality in the pursuit of it.

What is reality? 'What I perceive must be in some sense real. . . . But the scene is vision; it is not fact.' In Wordsworth's words, 'it is a prospect in the mind.' Yet the beauty and truth which the mind sees are not invented by the mind. Miss Scudder is no Berkeleian. The real exists in relationships; it comes to being at the point of 'union of my faculty of sight with external nature.' This union is no illusion, and though it transcends all human perception, such as that to which any finite mind is limited, the vision which each of us has is to be trusted as authentic.

Miss Scudder calls herself a Catholic. By this she does not mean that she is a member of the Roman Catholic Church, but that the insights achieved by historic Christianity and embodied in Catholic creed and practice seem to her to dis-

close the ultimate meaning of the world and of life. She is an Episcopalian, and has been a foremost influence in developing in that communion a consciousness of those abiding values of Christian faith which antedate the Reformation.

Her Catholicism was not a family heritage. Her father was a Congregational missionary in India, where he died by drowning while she was an infant. Brought to America by her mother, she passed her early childhood under the disciplines of the Puritan tradition. While still in her girlhood she spent three and a half years in Europe, where one day she found by chance a book which introduced her to the fascinating intimacies of the Catholic way of life. Here, she says, 'the young Protestant girl whose background was so strictly Puritan' received her 'first glimpses of her native land.' The possibility of becoming a Roman Catholic was imminent for many years, but under the preaching of Phillips Brooks and the guidance of the Reverend Charles H. Brent, who later became bishop, she remained in the Anglican communion and found that she was able, 'once surrendered to its disciplines,' to breathe the air she craved.

It was out of this background of Anglo-Catholicism that there emerged both the prompting and the support of Miss Scudder's social passion. She gave herself with unwearied zeal to the betterment of the living conditions of the underprivileged. She was a pioneer in the Social Settlement movement, and a comrade of Jane Addams and Walter Rauschenbusch and Lillian Wald and Mary Simkhovitch, and of Catherine Breshkovsky, 'true saint of the Russian Revolution.'

Miss Scudder became an ardent socialist. Her mind penetrated to the spiritual core of the philosophy of Karl Marx, which she felt was 'extraordinarily consonant with a Sacramental view of the universe.' She believes that some day a thinker will arise within the Christian tradition who will synthesize the Catholic faith with Marxian philosophy as Thomas Aquinas synthesized it with the philosophy of Aristotle.

It is this fusing of social passion with the Catholic faith which invests Miss Scudder's life experience with peculiar significance. Some of us cannot join her in taking over for ourselves so much of the liturgical and creedal forms which developed under conditions so unlike our own. But there are many social-minded Christians in the Protestant churches who are unhappy in the narrow range to which their religious imagination has been restricted. Among them the conviction is growing that the recovery of Catholicity for Protestantism — whatever forms it may assume — is supremely important for a church which holds itself responsible for the character of civilization. Miss Scudder's book, like the rich and many-sided life of which it tells, will be best understood by such readers.

CHARLES CLAYTON MORRISON

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"Charming," "amusing" and "curiously touching" are some of the phrases used by critics in describing this story of the middle-aged teacher who tried to live up to his reputation as a devil of a fellow. **\$2.50**

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By VAUGHAN WILKINS

"At times it reminds one of Dickens; some chapters move to the quick music of 'THE THREE MUSKETEERS'; here are romance, pity, terror, and with them the flavorsome salt of humor."—*Los Angeles Times*.

"A full and exciting tale . . . as one episode ends, the author's almost alarming powers of invention promptly supply another. Clearly seems born for the best-seller list."—*Sat. Review of Literature*.

"As a romance 'AND SO VICTORIA' has everything. The author has a fluency in skimming over the surface of past events that takes one's breath away"—*New York Sun*.

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THE MACMILLAN COMPANY

The BOOKSHELF

CONVERSATION AT MIDNIGHT

by Edna St. Vincent Millay

[Harpers, \$2.00]

IN Miss Millay's new volume a miscellaneous group of seven persons, including a stockbroker, a Communist poet, a Roman Catholic priest, and Ricardo, the Epicurean host, talk and talk. They begin on the subject of hunting dogs, then range through songbirds, the labor problem, food, aviation, the machine age, advertisements, languages



EDNA ST. VINCENT MILLAY

and jargon, hypocrisy, faith, capitalistic wars, music, women, Communism (in rather romanticized form), history, Communism (in less romanticized form), mushrooms, and again Communism (undisguised) — at which point one of the

company threatens to sing and be sick, and two others to be sick with him. Thus flushed with alcohol, the conversation goes down the drain. Ricardo remains fastidiously the arbiter. He is the central figure, unswayed by passion, above the battle, and probably the poet's mouthpiece. As a focus he is admirable, but scarcely strong enough to impose any discipline of logic on a chaotic piece of writing.

Since my opinion of this work as a whole is severely unfavorable, I must point out that it lifts toward poetry occasionally: —

... Midnight, Midnight in New York. It will be
almost dawn now
In Paris. . . .
... I fear not, friend, I fear that in Paris, too,
It is midnight, midnight in London; midnight in
Madrid.
The whole round world rolling in darkness, as if it
feared an air raid.
Not a mortal soul that can see his hand before
his face.

Though these lines fall far below the solar vision of Sir Thomas Browne's conclusion to the *Garden of Cyrus* or MacLeish's *You, Andrew Marvell*, yet the reversal of Joshua's miracle is somehow impressive. More abundant are the flashes of wit: —

'You can't any longer even support your slaves in the
slavery
To which they are accustomed,'

or

Babel will not encroach
On Heaven, save at the cost
Of all communication lost,

or

'Don't shoot,' says the crow in the cornfield:
'I'm an albatross.'

Such random felicities cannot redeem a 122-page work which, to speak frankly, is unutterably dull — as dull as a dictaphone record. To give the semblance of reality, the author has included pages of irrelevant talk; yet owing to a compromise with tradition in the form of Hudibrastic rhymes and loose, interspersed sonnets, she has lost all reality. And the mere phrasing is unworthy of one who, however one might suspect her substance, was a good phrase maker.

'I've got an aunt who's neither worse nor better
Than other people's aunts; she has her ways, —
Disbuds her dahlias, occasionally writes a letter
To the *Times*; she's going to die one of these days.

These opening lines to verses in sonnet rhyme-scheme display the careless indifference of a poet who feels beyond the need of taking pains.

It would be tedious, and indeed unprofitable, to consider the form of the work, for that does not exist either in substance or in expression. Little is said that one would not hear at any conglomerate gathering, and it is not said well. There is no climax. The characterization is nebulous. The reader has thought of Ogden Nash long before Miss Millay confesses to his idiom on page 47. Let us hope that the patent unworthiness of this present book will persuade Miss Millay to a resumption of her real powers. 'Renaissance' is still an acceptable model.

ROBERT HILLYER



THE MOTT FAMILY IN FRANCE

by Donald Moffat

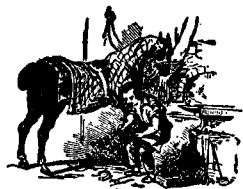
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THIS is a gay, wise, and quiet story of an American family spending a year in France; or rather it is a series of stories and impressions of the French town and country, and most of all the French people as they appear to an American who knows them well enough to realize that no foreigner can fully understand them.

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The BOOKSHELF

The peculiar Frenchness of the French as it strikes Americans, to irritate, to charm, or sometimes simply to bewilder, gives point to each episode in the book. Mrs. Mott encounters it when in the innocence of her heart she imagines that stepping to the post office to mail a package to Switzerland will be a brief and simple errand; she goes out to wrestle with it in her cynical attempt to discover whether the life guard, at the little bathing resort, who 'never, under any circumstances, entered the water,' actually knows how to swim, and is forced to retreat, hopelessly worsted.

Though Mr. Mott feels that he understands and sympathizes with the French idea of thrift, he is still rather taken aback when an ancient Frenchman, whose family he helps to support by sending him a small quarterly check, not only reminds him when he once forgets to mail the check, but asks him for interest to make up for the three months' delay. He is amused, if a little shocked, to discover the kind of souvenirs that his old friend, the stretcher-bearer, offers for sale on the streets of Paris; and is relieved when his friend, who deprecates his own stock in trade, shows him pictures, 'which he kept in a different pocket,' of his beaming and respectable family whom he supports in some comfort on the proceeds of his sidewalk peddling.

Mr. Mott knows too much to generalize about French architecture or French cooking. He dines at a Burgundy inn where 'the substance of each dish tasted like itself, raised to a heavenly *n*th degree'; he is confronted, at a summer hotel, with 'a little school of salt herring lying limp and dejected in a pool of oil' and a potato salad that reminds his young daughter of 'an old tired Irish stew.'

American impressions of the French are apt to be either sentimental or lugubriously whimsical. Their most obvious quality is the effort behind them. Mr. Moffat never raises his voice, makes no apparent effort, has no pretensions; and his book is really funny and really charming.

SAMUEL ROGERS

AND SO — VICTORIA

by Vaughan Wilkins

[Macmillan, \$2.50]

It is not without a certain reluctance that one finds oneself unable to give unstinted praise to so long and so earnestly written a book as Vaughan Wilkins's *And So — Victoria*. The author has obviously done considerable reading in the memoirs of the period and has made wise use of such incidents as that described in *The Creevey Papers* where the aging King William IV, dozing during a

conversation, awakes from time to time to mutter, 'Exactly so,' and then goes to sleep again. *The Greville Memoirs*, too, supply him — among other things — with the fact that the king had a head shaped 'like a pineapple.' On the whole we get a clear and quite vivid picture, drawn from the best contemporary sources, of the dissolute Georgian period and its main historical figures.

It is when he creates characters of his own that Mr. Wilkins is less satisfactory. He has, it is clear, read Dickens as well as the memoirs of the period, and, like Dickens, he is fond of grotesque characters. In fact, with the exception of a few of the leading figures, — people who are to be taken seriously by the reader, — there is hardly anyone in the book who is not grotesque. Unfortunately, however, it seems to be the letter rather than the spirit of Dickens's art which the author has captured, and we become conscious of a lack of selectivity and a repetition which we do not find in the works of the older author. While an extremely long thin nose as a label by which we are to identify a character is undoubtedly a legitimate, not to say a highly effective device, when half-a-dozen characters appear with just such a long thin nose the result is apt to be confusing. The same might be said of protruding teeth and certain other physical traits which, while entertaining enough in isolated instances, tend to lose force with repetition.

It would hardly be fair either to the publishers or to the prospective reader to give a detailed résumé of *And So — Victoria*. It will perhaps be sufficient to say that, being an historical novel, it has to do with plots against the royal house, stolen papers, duels, revenge, and the other standard attributes of this particular type of fiction. The early part of the book is a description, reminiscent of the difficulties encountered by David Copperfield, Little Nell, and others, of the wanderings of the boy, Christopher Harnish, and his escapes from various unpleasant grownups, all of whom are fully equipped with protruding teeth, leers, and, in one instance, with a steel hook in place of a hand. In this period of his life there is a good deal of beating, some rape, and a murder, and Christopher longs, quite understandably, to return to 'the world where silver tinkled against old china in rooms that smelled of lavender.'

Eventually he does, and is taken under the wing of Queen Caroline upon her return to England. From then on, although there are appropriate moments of suspense, his fortunes are on the upgrade until, when the book ends, he is able, practically single-handed, to foil a plot against the future queen: And so — Victoria. . . .



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Christopher never ceases dreaming about silver tinkling against old china, — indeed, there is a great deal of highly emotional, if vague, speculation about dreams throughout the book, — and while we are definitely told, as the story draws to a close, that he is at last growing up, we are never really fully convinced of the fact. There is something rather tiresome about his sensitiveness, especially in his relations with women, toward whom his reactions seem to be almost pathologically virginal; and no amount of gunplay and hair-breadth escapes quite serves to dispel the impression that we are face to face, not with a delicate and sensitive nature, but with somewhat of a prig.

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Perhaps the plot is a shade too neat for complete credibility, but it is great fun. Miss Gale's somewhat solemn little prologue, however, calls Mitty 'a woman in a quest for change who resists perception and all the sources of enjoyment allied to insight; a woman who unerringly celebrates the mediocre.' But it would be a mistake to conclude that Mitty herself is mediocre, except morally. She is piquant, lovely to look at, exasperating, appealing, as unpredictable as a kitten, as unmoral as a puppy, spoiled but not malicious, and totally unable to see herself except as an interesting dramatic spectacle. The idea that what she does should be in any way governed by its effect on others has never entered her pretty head. 'You think you're modern,' says Nick, 'but you're as old-fashioned as Eve.' It was a very artful device of the author to throw her into the midst of a family such as she has never known, in which mutual obligations and the observance of some

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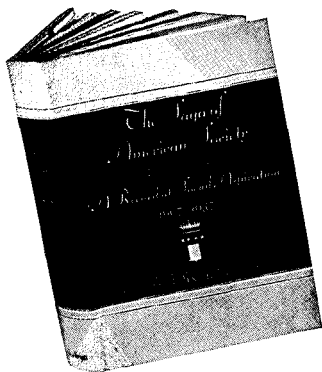
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sort of general code of honor is so ingrained as to be merely natural.

The depiction of a 'light woman,' in both the sense Nick's mother has in mind and the sense Miss Gale has, is so true that one welcomes each new touch with delight; and yet it is no better than the depiction of grave and upright Matthew Beldon; his wife, who thinks she manages her family; his daughter Anne, crippled but brave; his other daughter Genevieve, commonplace and domestic; Grandma, so happy in her delusions; and Billy, the adolescent idealist. In a novel so short (it is hardly 50,000 words), it requires a very mature art to make every sentence tell, and yet to avoid bareness. In this difficult feat of brevity it runs its rapid course with unerring sureness; and the surface comedy never wholly hides the serious meaning beneath. This meaning Matthew expresses near the end. Speaking to Mitty, he says: 'You said "I do what I think and they must make the best of it." That's what you said. Maybe it's just such talk that's helped to wreck the world that you despise. And it'll wreck this new world of yours, if you don't take care!' I am glad, however, that Miss Gale let her 'pretty particle,' as she calls her, shine for a while and did not quench her with too heavy an extinguisher.

R. M. GAY

THE MIRACLE OF ENGLAND

by André Maurois

[Harpers, \$3.75]

WHY the substantial volume published in London as *A History of England* should, in crossing the Atlantic, become *The Miracle of England*, it is not given us to know. Possibly the book-supporting classes in America are deemed to be peculiarly susceptible to the essay in interpretation, as against the chronicle of fact. Our latter-day reception of the more imaginative sort of biography, as written by M. Maurois among others, certainly gives color of plausibility to the notion. In any event it is the American title that more aptly tells the truth about these nearly 200,000 words, for in the upshot they are more interpretation than chronicle. The proportion of exegesis to fact is, indeed, higher than one can easily remember finding it in any comparable work by an author as frankly assuming the obligation of the historian; and by the old-fashioned measure of, say, Green's *Short History of the English People* the proportion is positively fantastic. A fair and even an inescapable inference is that M. Maurois takes the historian's function, as he has taken the biographer's, to be interpretation before all else.

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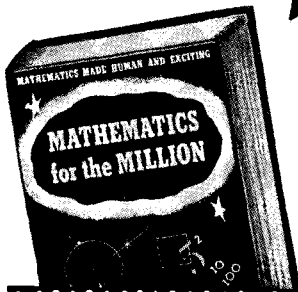
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For example, the stiffness that lost Britain her North American colonies he represents as a causative factor in the moderation that has solidified her other possessions into an Empire; and likewise he takes the enforced abdication of Edward VIII as proving that 'the strength of the roots was all the more manifest for the violence of the storm that shook the tree,' and that drastic changes could be 'carried out with dignity, order, and sound sense.'

To this system of finding in immense segments of human affairs the unity and the lucidity of high art there are patent advantages, and there are also as patent drawbacks. One of the greatest advantages is the freedom left the author to propound those arresting and luminous generalizations that lift a thousand facts to a plane transcending the factual; e.g., the calm statement, 'There has never been a real revolution in England.' One of the greatest drawbacks is the bland arrogance with which the merely human historian has to involve himself in the godlike business of telling us at every juncture what would certainly have happened if what did happen had not, and thus of exposing himself wholesale to the *post-hoc-ergo-propter-hoc* fallacy. M. Maurois says that it is the province of the good historian 'to describe the past, not to forecast the future'; but the truth is that his whole fashion of chronicling events is a species of prediction, almost of soothsaying. That is to say, he depicts every occurrence as already laden with the significance of its apparent consequences — a significance that it could not possibly have save by hindsight. That method of analysis is defiant of disproof when you have the known outcome to give you the hint. But can it, realistically speaking, be called describing the past?

The translation, by Mr. Hamish Miles, has pedestrian competence rather than grace. The volume is illustrated with portraits and adequately supplied with sketch maps. The index, as far as I have tested it, is accurate, but — no venial sin in a volume of this kind — noticeably incomplete.

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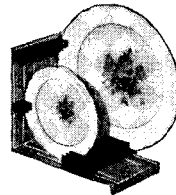
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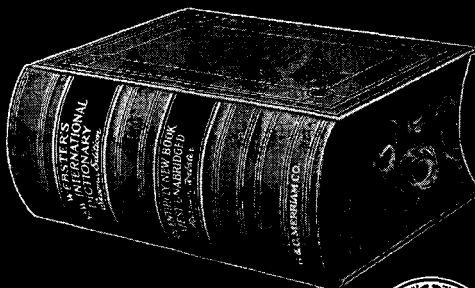
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UNBEKNOWNST to most readers, war has been raging within the book trade. Hostilities broke out months ago over the question of price cutting. A group of some twelve insurgents, sizable department stores in five states, began to bait the public — and each other — by selling the popular new books at less than the list price, and, when competition became fierce, at even less than cost.

The average publisher sells his books direct to approximately five hundred shops of one kind or another, which in turn retail them to the reader. These shops — the majority of which are small 'personal' affairs — buy their books at a discount beginning at 30 per cent and rising in proportion to the size of the order. The larger the order, the larger the discount. Department stores, with their special sales technique, can 'melt' a good many piles of books in the course of a day by treating popular books as 'loss-leaders' (that is, merchandise sold at a loss to induce allied purchases). These twelve insurgents could — and did — pull customers away from those smaller shops that make up the bulk of the book trade, are dependent upon the sale of books alone, and simply could not afford to engage in price cutting. So war was declared between the twelve insurgents and the confederacy of small shops.

The little fellows saw that they would be bled to death if price cutting continued. They saw no reason why *Gone with the Wind*, a \$3.00 book, should be slashed to \$1.49 by those willing to make it a loss-leader. The little fellows argued for a uniform price the country over, and they went to law. They found refuge in acts which have now been passed in thirty-eight states, and which sanction price maintenance. A New York publisher can now make contracts with a bookseller forbidding the slashing of prices. Macmillan, for instance, signed such contracts: *Gone with the Wind* is now selling everywhere at its original \$3.00 price.

As in all modern wars, noncombatants were involved. Macy's, one of the insurgents, now urges authors not to allow their books to be subject to such contracts; in a public statement the shop advises its customers that 'price fixing means price raising.' This advice seems to me decidedly unfair. The public should realize that the maintenance of current prices of new books (prices that are economically justifiable) works no hardship on the readers, nine out of ten of whom were never in a position to touch a loss-leader. The public should realize that the health of the book trade rests not alone in the hands of a few department stores, but in those of the 500 (which some day will be 5000) individual shops the nation over. The public should realize that this war must end, not in peace at any price, but in peace at a uniform and reasonable price.

Edward Weeks